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THE

# RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

AND THEIR

## Relations to Christianity

CONSIDERED IN

EIGHT LECTURES

FOUNDED BY THE HON. ROBERT BOYLE

111614

BY

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE, M.A.

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Τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ φανερόν ἐστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς· ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς αὐτοῖς ἐφανέρωσε.—
Rom. i. 19.

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND

CHARLES JAMES,

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

My Lord,

Through your Lordship's kindness I was appointed to the Boyle Lectureship; the same kindness has permitted me to relinquish it at the end of one year. I take the liberty of presenting to your Lordship the Discourses of that year. The study of the subject which is considered in them has been most interesting and comforting to myself; I shall be thankful indeed if it should prove of any use to my countrymen. Desiring for the Church universal, for that portion of it especially over which your Lordship presides, and for your Lordship personally, all the blessings of this season,

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's very obliged Servant,

F. D. MAURICE.

*December*, 1846.

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# PREFACE.

THE substance of these Lectures was delivered, according to the directions of Boyle's Will, in one of the London Churches, on the first Mondays of certain months in the years 1845 and 1846. Though it is not imperative on the preacher to print his Discourses, it has been the custom to do so. Indeed the intention of the Founder seems to be scarcely fulfilled by addressing a series of Sermons on subjects requiring some attention, at distant intervals, to the eight or ten persons who in the present times compose an ordinary week-day congregation. In preparing them for publication I have omitted the texts, which were little more than mottoes, and have altered the forms of language which belong especially to pulpit composition.

The object of the Lectures, will, I hope, be sufficiently intelligible to those who read them. But it is a duty to speak of some writers who have discussed the same subjects, and to whom I am indebted.

In the first Lecture I have not touched upon

the question which is considered in Mr. Forster's *Mahometanism Unveiled.* My business was with popular views upon the subject, not with learned and ingenious speculations. Of Mr. Forster's theory I do not feel competent to express an opinion; so far as it evinces a desire to deal fairly with facts which Christian apologists have often perverted, and a confidence, that the cause of Christianity must be the better for such fairness, it must, I am sure, have done good, even if the basis upon which it rests should be found untenable.

Mr. Carlyle's Lecture on Mahomet in his *Hero Worship,* is probably much better known to my readers than Mr. Forster's treatise. Some persons may have been led by that Lecture to identify Mahometanism with reverence for the person of Mahomet; they will strongly object to the sentiments which I have expressed in one passage of this book. But I do not anticipate any such objection from Mr. Carlyle himself. No writer has more distinctly recognised the Islamite principle of subjection to an absolute Will, as the vital one in this faith; or has exhibited a more earnest, I had nearly said a more exclusive, veneration for that principle. A man seems to him to be strong or weak, admirable or contemptible, precisely as he is possessed by it, or as he substitutes some notion of

happiness, some theory of the Universe in place of it. Those who feel that they are under the deepest obligation to Mr. Carlyle for the power with which he has brought the truth of this principle to their minds, for the proofs which he has given that, as much in the seventeenth century as in the seventh, it could break down whatever did not pay it homage, cannot be persuaded to look upon any phrases of his which appear to convey an opposite impression, however much they may be quoted, however partial he may seem to them himself, as the most genuine expressions of his mind. They rather recognise in these phrases an attempt, confessedly unsuccessful, to bridge over the chasm which separates, as Mr. Carlyle thinks, the ages in which this faith could be acted out from our own in which it has become only a name. That no phrases or formulas, from whatever period or country they may be borrowed, can accomplish this object, Mr. Carlyle is a sufficient witness; that it must be accomplished in some way, his lamentations over the present state of the world abundantly prove. Those who think that it is the first duty of an author to provide them with sunshine, find these lamentations intolerable; there are some who seem to be pleased with them as they might be with any unusually strong exhibition of passion upon the stage. There are others who hear in his wailings

the echoes of their own saddest convictions, but who for that reason cannot be content to spend their time merely in listening to them or repeating them. One who desires to lead an honest life, and learns that men in former days were honest, because they believed in a personal Being, who is, and was, and is to come, must ask himself whether such a belief has become impossible for him. And if we are assured by Mr. Carlyle that under the conditions of Mahometanism or even of Christian Puritanism it is now impossible, then we must again ask, Why so? Is it because the truth which made these faiths so energetic is not what it was? or is it because it dwelt in them apart from other truths, without which in our days, it can scarcely even exist, much less live? These questions may never present themselves to a dilettante admirer of Mr. Carlyle; those whom his writings have really moved, and who regard him with hearty, though perhaps silent, gratitude and affection, are, I know, haunted by them continually. If these Lectures should lead any one such questioner even to hope for an answer, they will do the work for which I especially designed them.

In illustration of the remark that the Mahometan conquerors were not *merely* 'Scourges of God,' however they may have deserved that title, I would suggest to the reader a comparison of

their wars with those of Zinghis Khan. May I advise him also to read with some attention the passage in Gibbon (Chap. LXIV. Vol. XI. pp. 391, 392, 8vo Ed.) on the philosophical religion of that Mogul whom Frederick II., the accomplished Suabian, the enemy of Popes, the suspected infidel, denounced as the common foe of mankind, against whom he invoked a crusade of all princes? Gibbon's panegyric, illustrated as it is by his faithful narrative of the proceedings of Zinghis Khan and his successors in Persia, Russia, Hungary, &c., of their incapacity to preserve a record of their own acts, and of their ultimate conversion by the bigoted Mussulman, is full of the deepest instruction.

In connection with the remarks upon the constitution of Mahometan Society as exhibited in the Ottoman Empire, I would recommend the study of Ranke's excellent Essay upon that subject in his *Fürsten und Volken.*

The second Lecture is a collection of hints, which may not, I hope, be quite useless to some whose personal observations of India, or whose knowledge of its languages may enable them to detect my mistakes, and if they please, to laugh at my ignorance. The scholars of British India and the intelligent natives have good right to despise any one who sets up his own notions in

opposition to their testimonies, and who makes these notions an excuse for severe reflections upon a state of society with which he is unacquainted. They may possibly be tolerant of one who by comparing their testimonies, so far as he has been able to gather them, has corrected many crude notions which he had previously entertained, and who desires nothing more than that any sentiments of disgust and contempt which Englishmen in India may conceive for the notions and practices which they witness, should rather be counteracted than strengthened by their English education. Professor H. Wilson has undertaken an edition of Mr. Mill's *History of British India*, in the hope, as he intimates in his preface, of correcting, by the evidence of facts, the harsh judgments of the Hindoos, into which the historian was led by theory. To the civil and military servants of the Company such a work may be as useful as the design of it is benevolent. But the missionary, though it is to be hoped he will not neglect to profit either by Mr. Mill's labours, or by the experience and oriental wisdom with which Professor Wilson has enriched them, is open to another kind of temptation, which the one will not much increase, nor the other enable him to resist. The actual sight of a country wholly given to idolatry, must be

far more startling and appalling to him than any pictures he can have formed of it previously. Not to weaken these impressions, but to prevent them from overwhelming him, and so destroying that sympathy with the victims of idolatry, which is the most necessary qualification for his task, should be the great object of his home instructors. For this end, I think, we should aim, not merely at cultivating Christian love and pity in his heart: these will scarcely be kept alive, if there be not also an intellectual discipline, (I call it *intellectual*, yet it is in the very highest sense a moral discipline,) to show him what the thoughts and feelings of which Hindooism is the expression, have to do with himself, how they are interpreted by the experience of individuals and the history of the world. I look earnestly to St. Augustine's College, in the hope that it may fulfil both these tasks. Should it do so, it will be indeed worthy of its name; it may be the instrument of restoring faith to England as well as of imparting it to her dependencies. For do *we* not need, as I have hinted in my last Lecture, to be taught that the Gospel is not a dead letter, by discovering what living wants there are in us, and all men, which it meets and satisfies?

It might have been desirable that I should have appended to this, and the two following

Lectures, some illustrative notes: I had intended to do so, but I feared that I should increase the size and price of the volume, without conferring a proportionate benefit upon the reader. I can enumerate in a few lines the books from which my proofs would have been drawn. From them (and they are within the reach of persons who are as ignorant of Oriental literature as I am) much more may be learnt in the course of a few hours' fair study, than from long appendices of extracts selected at the pleasure of an Author.

The Essay of Mr. Colebrooke on the Vedas, in the eighth volume of the *Asiatic Researches*, and Mr. Rosen's Latin translation of the *Rig Veda*, are at present * the chief helps which the Western student possesses for a knowledge of the earliest Hindoo faith. It is important to observe, that while Mr. Colebrooke's extracts are chiefly taken from the liturgical part of the Vedas, those upon which the late Rammohun Roy raised his argument for the corruption of the later faith, were doctrinal passages. His conclusion, as I have hinted in my Lecture, is therefore unsatisfactory, though it ought

* I understand that a young German, now in London, whose knowledge of Sanscrit is profound, and his industry *plus quam Germanica*, has it in contemplation to publish and translate all the Vedas. English money it is to be hoped will not be wanting, when the other and more indispensable requisite is supplied by a foreigner.

not to be called unfair or disingenuous. If he had quoted the prayers which Mr. Colebrooke has made us acquainted with, English readers would no doubt have discredited his boast of the primitive Monotheism of his country. But they would have done so hastily. Those prayers imply *a* Monotheism as certainly as the direct teaching; and the one may justly be adduced as the interpretation of the other. The question is, *what* Monotheism? The prayers and doctrine I think make the same answer: a Monotheism which made it impossible to distinguish the object worshipped from the mind of the worshipper, and *therefore* which implicitly contained, and out of which was inevitably developed, the later Polytheism. We may be thankful to Rammohun Roy for helping us to detect the old faith at the root of one which seems so unlike it, but cannot allow him to confuse us, however innocently, by the use of a phrase, which is susceptible of the most opposite significations.

The translation of the Menù Code, by Sir W. Jones, brings that part of the subject within the reach of all. I hope the reader will verify the account I have given of it by examining it for himself, together with the excellent digest of it, in the first volume of Mr. Elphinstone's history.

The third Appendix to the history of this eminent statesman contains an admirable commentary

upon the Greek accounts of India, contained in the fifteenth book of Strabo, and the *Indica* of Arrian.

The Vishnu Purana, edited by Professor Wilson, exhibits another and much more recent stage of the mythology—that which I have spoken of as produced by the artificial incorporation of the old faith with the different kinds of worship which had arisen from popular movements and reactions. To trace the progress of these movements with little help from external history, is of course difficult; no one solution of the problem can be certain; all as hints may be useful. The one I have supposed seems to be internally probable and consistent; still there is an objection to it which I have no wish to conceal. Professor Wilson offers reasons for thinking that the Puranas which have the Siva element predominant in them, are considerably older than those which have the Vaishnava characteristics. It may hence be concluded that the Siva worship itself preceded that of Vishnù. If this were the case, I should be wrong in my fancy respecting the first transition from the merely abstracted Brahminical religion to the popular; at least, wrong in assuming what may have been true in a particular case, as explaining the history generally. Other authorities think that the two forms of worship may have had a contemporaneous deve-

lopment in different places; a view not incompatible with the one I have taken, especially as it is assumed on all hands that the names considered as attributes or characters of the divinity, as forms through which he was beheld, existed almost in the first stage of the religion.

The subject of the Philosophical sects among the Hindoos is treated by Mr. Colebrooke in a series of papers in the first and second Volumes of the *Royal Asiatic Transactions*. These papers (which should be compared with the paper on the Védánta System, by Col. Vans Kennedy, Vol. III. p. 412) are full of interest.

These writings of actual observers should be studied before the speculations of even the most intelligent thinkers. But I should be ungrateful if I did not say that the passages on India in the Mythologies of Baur and Windischmann, and still more in Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, with the little book of Frederick Schlegel, called *Die Indien*, have illuminated many dark and dull reports, and have enabled me to feel the connection between the thoughts of other periods and countries and those which characterise our own times.

The temptation to speak of Buddhism merely or chiefly in this connection, is one which I was aware of when I entered upon the subject in my third Lecture, and which I strove to resist. I am sure

that any advantage we may derive from a comparison of the difficulties which have beset Asiatics in different ages, with those which are besetting Europeans now, must depend upon the earnestness with which we determine first to understand the former in themselves. If we are more eager to make applications, than to ascertain what we have to apply, we may write a polemical treatise which will convince all who agreed with us before, and will furnish writers in reviews, who have exhausted their old arguments or invectives against some opponent, with a set of new phrases; but we shall not remove one perplexity from any earnest mind; we shall only throw into it a new element of confusion. The ultimate tendencies of Buddhism to entire evaporation, to mere negation, are manifest enough. The like tendencies assuredly exist, perhaps are becoming stronger every day, in Christendom. But to take the result of a certain doctrine or habit of mind, without considering its stages, varieties, counteractions; its lights as well as its shadows; how it weaves for itself at one time a dogmatic or sacerdotal vesture; how it sinks at another into a mere speculation; above all, what an Eternal Verity keeps it alive in all its forms; is not using it for the warning and instruction of men, but turning it into a mask for frightening children. If it is well for us to show what possibilities lurk

in Buddhism because they lurk in us, still more ought we to consider its actual history, because it is the history of a process which may be passing in the minds of persons whom we are most ready to think of as having reached the last development of unbelief; because it may be going on in us when we are giving ourselves credit for the greatest amount of faith.

Entering upon the subject with these feelings, I desired to hear of Buddhism not in digests, which represented it as a system at rest, but from intelligent observers who saw it in motion and described its different appearances. The papers on the subject in the Royal Asiatic Society are for this purpose invaluable, especially those of Mr. Hodgson, to which I have referred in the text (*Transactions*, Vol. II. p. 222); that on Buddha and the Phrabat by Captain Low (Vol. III. p. 57); that on the consecration of priests by Mr. Knox (Vol. III. p. 271); the disputations respecting Caste by a Buddhist (Vol. III. p. 160). To these may be added different accounts of the Lama in the *Asiatic Researches*, (Vol. I. p. 197, and XVII. pp. 522—524,) and the later narrative of Mr. Turner. For a general statement, I know nothing better than the article on Buddhism in the *Penny Cyclopædia*. Dr. Pritchard's works will supply valuable information upon this as upon most other

subjects. Of course it would be absurd to slight the French writers upon Buddhism, though on a subject which offers such facilities for systematising, and in which systematising is so likely to mislead, it may be lawful to view them with some suspicion.

Of the Confucian doctrine, on the other hand, they are probably the best, as they are the most zealous and enthusiastic expounders. The *Quatre Livres* of Confucius, translated by Pauthier, is a moderately-sized and readable book, and the preface to it is very useful and instructive. The Chinese reverence of Fathers is abundantly illustrated in the fourth volume of the *Mémoires sur les Chinois, par les Missionaires de Pékin.* All our recent writers, Davis, Medhurst, Gutzlaff, though valuable in reference to China generally, are rather vague and unsatisfactory on the subject of its religion. The Chinese exhibition at Knightsbridge was, in this respect, more valuable than any of them.

The recent interpretation of the arrow-headed inscriptions by Major Rawlinson will add, no doubt, greatly to our knowledge of the Persian or Zend doctrines. They seem to confirm the opinion which was so long entertained upon other grounds, that Darius Hystaspes was an instrument in the restoration of the true Persian faith, after it had been subverted by the Pseudo-Smerdis. It seems also

clearer than it was before, that the reformation, which is connected with the name of Zoroaster, consisted mainly in the assertion of the absolute supremacy of Ormuzd. It does not follow that Ahriman worship was prohibited or wholly denounced: that it was continually re-appearing in the popular mind, is evident. The later Magian faith may have been an attempt to reconcile the reformed with the popular doctrine; or rather, may it not be supposed, that Zoroaster's was the regal creed, and that the priests never more than partially recognised it?

What has been said respecting the three cycles of Egyptian gods, is explained at large in the *Ægypten* of Chevalier Bunsen, Vol. I. p. 423—433. He has a remark (p. 432) upon the mistaken effort to form Triads in different mythologies, by bringing together gods from different localities, or periods of history, which I have found very useful. Keeping it in memory, I think I have learnt more to find in THE Triad, an interpretation of all mythology, than if I had laboured ever so diligently to find parallels for it in the external parts of the systems.

If I had been writing a history instead of a lecture, it would have behoved me, when speaking of the relations of Christianity with Persia, to have noticed the Nestorian missions in that country. I believe the history of these missions would throw

an important light upon the whole subject; but it would have led me into many details, which, especially in a recapitulation, I was anxious to avoid. To pass over any facts merely because they might tend to the honour of heretics, would be grossly inconsistent with the professions, and, I hope, with the spirit, of these Lectures.*

* I ought perhaps to have noticed two large Works, written by Englishmen, on the subject of my second Lecture; the Hindoo Antiquities of Mr. Thomas Maurice, and the work on the Literature, Manners, and Religion of the Hindoos, by Mr. Ward. They illustrate two habits of mind directly opposite to each other; almost equally unfavourable, I think, to a true apprehension of the Brahminical faith, and of its relation to Christianity. Mr. Maurice seems to regard the abominations of idolatry as objects merely of literary interest and antiquarian curiosity. Mr. Ward can see only the hateful and the devilish; of what good it may be the counterfeit, what divine truth may be concealed in it, and may be needed to supplant it, he has not courage to inquire. Each, I think, is refuted on its own ground. Dilettante scholarship is found not to be sound scholarship. That which has no hold on the present, proves not to be true of the past. Mere observers of evil do not describe the evil accurately or vividly enough; the points may be correct, but the impression is false; for want of light, we do not feel the darkness. I believe most persons find it exceedingly difficult to read either of these books; quite impossible, to remember them.

I ought to have said, when speaking of Rammohun Roy, that his Tracts were written originally for his own countrymen, not for Englishmen. They were first printed in Calcutta: collected and re-published in London, I believe under his direction, in 1832.

# THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD.

## PART I.

## LECTURE I.

*Why these Lectures were founded. Design of the present Course. Mahometanism. Its successes. Reasons assigned for them. Principle of the Faith.*

IN the year 1691 ROBERT BOYLE directed by a Codicil to his Will "that Eight Sermons should be preached each year in London for proving the Christian Religion against notorious Infidels, to wit, Atheists, Theists, Pagans, Jews, and Mahometans; not descending lower to any controversies that are among Christians themselves." He desired "that the preacher of these Sermons should be assisting to all companies, and encouraging of them in any undertaking for propagating the Christian Religion to foreign parts;" and "further, that he should be ready to satisfy such real scruples as any may have concerning these matters, and to answer such objections and difficulties as may be started, to which good answers have not yet been made."

The second of these clauses seems to explain the intention of the first. The objections to Christianity urged by Jews, Pagans, and Mahometans

were not, perhaps, likely to perplex an ordinary Englishman. But England, in the 17th century, was becoming more and more a colonising country. The American settlements were increasing in importance every year. The East India Company had already begun its career of commerce, if not of conquest. In his own particular department of natural science Boyle observed the most steady progress; no one was doing more to accelerate it than himself. He would naturally divine that an advancement, not less remarkable, must take place in another region, in which the interests of men were far more directly engaged. He must have felt how much the student in his closet was helping to give speed to the ships of the merchant, and to discover new openings to his ambition. As a benevolent man he could not contemplate accessions to the greatness and resources of his country, without longing that she might also be conscious of her responsibility, that she might bring no people within the circle of her government whom she did not bring within the circle of her Light. Accordingly, we find him offering frequent encouragement by his pen and purse to the hard-working missionaries who were preaching the Gospel among the North American Indians. Cheering words, pecuniary help, and faithful prayers, might be all which these teachers of savages could ask from their brethren at home. But Boyle knew that difficulties which they would rarely encounter must continually present themselves to those who came in contact with the Brahmin in Hindostan, with

the Mussulman both in Europe and Asia, with the Jew in every corner of the globe. A man who thought lightly or contemptuously of any of these, or of their arguments—who had not earnestly considered what they would have to say, and what he had to tell them—could not be expected to do them much good. Moreover, Boyle was too well acquainted with philosophical men, with the general society of England, and with his own heart, not to be aware that there was another kind of opposition more formidable than this, which the proposal to diffuse Christianity abroad must struggle with. Was the gift worth bestowing? Were we really carrying truth into the distant parts of the earth when we were carrying our own faith into them? Might not the whole notion be a dream of our vanity? Might not particular soils be adapted to particular religions? Might not the effort to transplant one into another involve the necessity of mischievous forcing, and terminate in inevitable disappointment? Might not a better day be at hand in which all religions alike should be found to have done their work of partial good, of greater evil, and when something much more comprehensive and satisfactory should supersede them? Were not thick shadows overhanging Christendom itself, which must be scattered before it could be the source of light to the world?

Such questions as these Boyle must often have heard propounded by others; but the deepest and most painful suggestion of them had been to himself. He tells us, in the sketch of an European

tour written under the name of *Philaretus*, that "when he was still a young man, after he had "visited other places, his curiosity at last led him "to those wild mountains where the first and "chiefest of the Carthusian abbeys is seated; where "the devil, taking advantage of that deep raving "melancholy befitting so sad a place, his humour, "and the strange stories and pictures he found "there of Bruno, the father of that order, sug-"gested such strange and hideous thoughts, and "such distracting doubts of some of the fundamen-"tals of Christianity, that though his looks did "little betray his thoughts, nothing but the forbid-"dingness of self-despatch hindered his acting it. "But, after a tedious languishment of many months "in this tedious perplexity, at last it pleased God "one day he had received the Sacrament to restore "unto him the withdrawn sense of his favour. "But, though Philaretus ever looked upon these "impious suggestions rather as temptations to be "resisted than as doubts to be resolved, yet never "did these fleeting clouds cease now and then to "darken the clearest serenity of his quiet; which "made him often say that injections of this nature "were such a disease to the faith as toothache is to "the body, for though it be not mortal, it is very "troublesome. However, as all things work to-"gether for good to them that love God, Philaretus "derived from this anxiety the advantage of ground-"edness in his religion; for the perplexity his "doubts created obliged him to remove them—to "be seriously inquisitive of the truth of the very

"fundamentals of Christianity, and to hear what "both Jews and Turks, and the chief sects of "Christians, could allege for their several opinions; "that so, though he believed more than he could "comprehend, he might not believe more than he "could prove, and not owe the steadfastness of his "faith to so poor a cause as the ignorance of what "might be objected against it. He said, speaking "of those persons who want not means to inquire "and abilities to judge, that it was not a greater "happiness to inherit a good religion, than it was "a fault to have it only by inheritance, and think "it the best because it is generally embraced, "rather than embrace it because we know it to be "the best. That though we cannot always give a "reason for what we believe, yet we should be ever "able to give a reason why we believe it. That it "is the greatest of follies to neglect any diligence "that may prevent the being mistaken where it is "the greatest of miseries to be deceived. That "how dear soever things taken upon the score are "sold, there is nothing worse taken up upon trust "than religion, in which he deserves not to meet "with the true one that cares not to examine "whether or no it be so." (Works, Vol. I. p. 12.)

It is evident, I think, that a comparison of religious systems undertaken by a man who had just passed through so tremendous a conflict, and who had no professional motive for entering upon it, must have been something very different from a dry legal inquiry respecting the balance of probabilities in favour of one or the other. I do not

mean that Boyle will not have brought to this subject all the habits of patient investigation which he ordinarily applied to the study of physical phenomena. The very anguish of his mind made it essential that he should seek for a real standing-ground; and that he should not therefore strain facts for the sake of arriving at an agreeable conclusion. Indeed, it is difficult to say which conclusion would seem most agreeable to a man exercised as he was: there would be at times a bias of understanding, and even affection, as strong against Christianity, as his education could create in favour of it. But undoubtedly, his object in questioning these different schemes of belief will have been to ascertain what each of them could do for him: what there was in it to meet the demands of his heart and reason. It was no occasion for clever special pleading; the question was to him one of life and death: when he had once resolved it, the next duty was to act upon his conviction, and to strive that all men should be better for that, which he, because he was a man, had found to be needful for himself. Upon this principle he founded these Lectures. The truth of which he had become assured, was, he believed, a permanent one; the next generation would need it as much as his own. He did not suppose that the actual relation in which that truth stood to different systems of belief could alter. But it did not follow that the inquiry respecting the nature of that relation would be exhausted in his day. As new regions unfolded themselves to European ad-

venture, new facts modifying or changing previous notions respecting the faiths which prevailed in them might come to light; fresh and more trying experiences might make the past more intelligible; the same doubts respecting the justice, wisdom, or possibility of bringing other men into our religious fellowship which presented themselves to his contemporaries, might appear again and again in very different shapes, appealing to even opposite feelings and tempers.

The event, I believe, has proved that he was right. Within fifty years a prodigious change has taken place in the feelings of men generally —of philosophical men particularly—respecting Religious Systems. In the latter part of the 17th century, still more during a great part of the 18th, they were regarded by those who most gave the tone to popular thinking and who had the highest reputation for wisdom, as the inventions of lawgivers and priests. Men cleverer and more dishonest than the rest of the world found it impossible to build up systems of policy or to establish their own power, unless they appealed to those fears of an invisible world which ignorance so willingly receives and so tenderly fosters. This being the admitted maxim respecting religions generally, it seemed the office of the Christian apologist to show that there was one exception; to explain why the Gospel could not be referred to this origin; how entirely unlike it was to those forms of belief which were rightly considered deceptions. That many dangerous positions were

confuted by works written with this object; that many of the distinguishing marks of Christianity were brought out in them; that many learnt from them to seek and to find a standing-ground in the midst of pits and morasses, it is impossible to doubt. But the demonstrations of God's providence were in this case, as in all others, infinitely broader, deeper, more effectual than those of man's sagacity. The evidence furnished by the great political Revolution at the close of the last century seems slowly to have undermined the whole theory respecting the invisible world and men's connection with it, which possessed the teachers of that century. Men are beginning to be convinced, that if Religion had had only the devices and tricks of statesmen or priests to rest upon, it could not have stood at all; for that these are very weak things indeed, which, when they are left to themselves, a popular tempest must carry utterly away. If they have lasted a single day, it must have been because they had something better, truer than themselves to sustain them. This better, truer thing, it seems to be allowed, must be that very faith in men's hearts upon which so many disparaging epithets were cast, and which it was supposed could produce no fruits that were not evil and hurtful. Faith it is now admitted has been the most potent instrument of good to the world; has given to it nearly all which it can call precious. But then it is asked, is there not ground for supposing that all the different religious systems, and not one

only, may be legitimate products of that faith which is so essential a part of man's constitution? Are not they manifestly adapted to peculiar times and localities and races? Is it not probable that the theology of all alike is something merely accidental, an imperfect theory about our relations to the universe, which will in due time give place to some other? Have we not reason to suppose that Christianity, instead of being, as we have been taught, a Revelation, has its root in the heart and intellect of man, as much as any other system? Are there not the closest, the most obvious relations between it and them? Is it not subject to the same law of decay from the progress of knowledge and society with all the rest? Must we not expect that it too will lose all its mere theological characteristics, and that what at last survives of it will be something of a very general character, some great ideas of what is good and beautiful, some excellent maxims of life, which may very well assimilate, if they be not actually the same, with the essential principles which are contained in all other religions, and which will also, it is hoped, abide for ever?

Notions of this kind will be found, I think, in much of the erudite as well as of the popular literature of this day; they will often be heard in social circles; they are undoubtedly floating in the minds of us all. While we entertain them, it is impossible that we can, with sound hearts and clear consciences, seek to evangelise the world. Yet they are not to be spoken of as if they proceeded from a merely denying, unbelieving spirit:

they are often entertained by minds of deepest earnestness; they derive their plausibility from facts which cannot be questioned, and which a Christian should not wish to question. They may, I believe, if fairly dealt with, help to strengthen our own convictions, to make our duty plainer and to show us better how we shall perform it. All their danger lies in their vagueness: if we once bring them fairly to those tests by which the worth of hypothesis in another department is ascertained, it may not perhaps be hard to discover what portions of truth, and what of falsehood, they contain. I think I shall be carrying out the intention of Boyle's Will, if I attempt, in my present course, to make this experiment. I propose to examine the great Religious Systems which present themselves to us in the history of the world, not going into their details, far less searching for their absurdities, but inquiring what is their main characteristical principle. If we find, as the objectors say, good in each of them, we shall desire to know what this good is, and under what conditions it may be preserved and made effectual. These questions may, I think, be kept distinct from those which will occupy us in the latter half of the course. In what relation does Christianity stand to these different faiths? If there be a faith which is meant for mankind, is this the one or must we look for another?

I shall not take these systems in their historical order, but rather according to the extent of the influence they have exerted over mankind; a rea-

son which would at once determine me to begin in the present Lecture with MAHOMETANISM.

For the first ninety years after the publication of this religion in the world, the Christians of Europe could do little more than wonder at its amazing and, as it seemed, fatal, progress in Asia and Africa. Before the end of a century it had obtained a settlement in a corner of their own Continent and threatened every part of it. But the new Western Empire established itself, Christian champions appeared in Spain, the power of the Caliphs declined. Then Islamism appeared again in another conquering, proselytising tribe. For two centuries the European nations wrestled to recover its conquests in the Holy Land. A period followed during which the disciples of both religions seemed almost equally threatened by Tartar hordes. These stooped to the Crescent; in the 15th century a mighty Mahometan government was seen occupying the capital of the East, threatening the Latin world, profiting by the disputes of Christian sovereigns with one another, exhibiting its own order and zeal in melancholy contrast to the quarrels, unbelief, and heartlessness of monarchs and prelates. It became a question with the thoughtful men of that time, whether the Ottoman empire did not possess a polity which was free from the tendencies to weakness and decay that had existed in all previous governments, and whether it might not last for ever.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, when the fallacy of this notion was making itself evident, Christians

began to speculate coldly and quietly upon the causes which had given such prevalency to this faith in past days, and which still kept it alive in their own. It may be well to consider a few of the explanations which different persons, according to their different observations or habits of mind, have offered of this fact, that we may not lose the benefit of any light which has been thrown from any quarter upon the nature or principle of the religion itself.

I. It was an easy and obvious method of solving the difficulty, to say that the Mahometans had triumphed by the force of their arms; personal valour and a compact military organisation being comprehended under that term. That they were warriors from the first, that their courage was often amazing, and that the Ottomans for a long time possessed the secret of military subordination, as scarcely any nation has ever possessed it, is evidently true. And it is a truth of which Christian apologists would very naturally avail themselves. The opposition, not in some accidental points, but in their whole scheme and conception, between the Sermon on the Mount, and the doctrine which could require or sanction such methods for its diffusion, would of course be carefully noted. Plain men would be asked to declare which teaching bore clearest tokens of belonging to the earth, which of a Divine origin. Nor was this argument an unfair one, however it might be, and has been again and again traversed by an appeal to the practice of Christians, and the weapons to which they

have resorted for the defence and propagation of their faith. For it is quite clear that the Mahometan wars were no accidental outgrowth of the system—that they were not resorted to with a doubtful conscience, with any uneasy feeling that they might by possibility be inconsistent with the intentions of their Founder. On the contrary, the very spirit and life of Mahometanism exhibited themselves in these wars. In them came forth all the most striking and characteristic virtues which the doctrine has a right to boast of.

The Mahometan ruler felt that he was fulfilling his vocation when he was going forth against the infidel; he could scarcely fulfil it in any other way. We know indeed that Bagdad and Cordova became celebrated for all graceful refinements, for letters, even for toleration. We know that science, physical and metaphysical, became a distinctive mark of the Arabians. Where a book like the Koran, written in a beautiful language, is regarded with unbounded reverence, by degrees it will be studied; and out of that study will be produced a literature which may spread itself in various directions. Monarchs would feel the influence of such pursuits, and would consider it their chief honour to direct them. But though periods like those of Haroun-al-Raschid were sure to occur in the history of Mahometanism, though in one sense they may be considered natural developments of it, they assuredly do not belong to the religion as such; they rather showed that the original spirit which possessed its disciples was becoming feeble;

they portended a further decline of it, and probably its revival in some more vigorous form. Whenever a Mahometan ruler quite allows his arms to rust, whenever he does not feel that it is his main work in the world to diffuse his doctrine by those means which are most simple and direct, we may be sure, whatever temporary prosperity may be vouchsafed him, that his dynasty cannot last very long.

But though on these grounds it may be fair to represent Mahometanism as essentially warlike, it is surely a great mistake to suppose that by saying so we have accounted for its spread over so large a portion of the earth. No thoughtful man could accept such a solution, because when he hears of valour in men and discipline in armies, he must ask himself whence these proceeded, how they came to attach themselves to this particular faith, and because that question must inevitably lead him to seek for the real ground of success elsewhere. It cannot satisfy any Christian, because the very belief which he opposes to that of the Mahometan must teach him that arms are not the most mighty things; that there are secret invisible influences which are stronger than they.

II. The proneness of the human mind to embrace any imposture was resorted to as a second method of accounting for this phenomenon, one which might perhaps combine with the former and help out its weakness. Of this proneness, the records of the world's history seem to supply abundant proofs—our own daily experience of others, and of

ourselves, still more. All men, in one kind of language or another, have confessed that there is something in man which tempts him to entertain falsehood and disown truth, to follow deceitful guides, to reject the honest and true, to make a lie and to love it. And yet I think all confess, in one kind of language or another, that whenever any man, or any body of men, has learnt to relish what is false, and dislike what is true for its own sake, that man, or that body of men, is in the last stage of corruption and degradation—is approaching a point in which manliness, faith, and union become impossible—in which the death of all individual power, of all social existence, is at hand. That the elements of such destruction are in every human being and in every human fellowship at every moment, and that they are often gathered up in religious systems, none will dispute. But that they can account for the existence of any thing which has endured for a long time, which has manifested great power; that in them lies the source of a vigour and concentration which they are perpetually threatening to extinguish, I think no sane person who sets the question fairly before himself can believe. We may need the propensity of men to believe impostures, as a key to many portions of the history of the Mahometan faith, to many circumstances of its present condition; we shall not find therein the secret of its diffusion and predominance.

III. Led by these or other considerations, to feel that what is right must be recognised in this faith,

as well as what is wrong, Christians have sometimes explained its influence, by speaking of the plagiarisms in the Koran from the Old and New Testament Scriptures. That Mahometanism derived much from its connection with the older faiths of the world, would be confessed, I suppose, even by the philosophers who have least veneration for those faiths. They would easily acknowledge, nay, have often acknowledged, how much historical dignity and sacredness an Arabian teacher must have acquired by connecting himself with patriarchs who had lived two thousand years before; who were attached, by closest links of association, to the very soil his countrymen trod; whose doctrine he could speak of as the truth given to their fathers, now revived in its purity by himself. Nor would it be denied by these philosophers, that one living not only among Sabèan worshippers, but amongst Christians and Jews, might advance his cause by professing his sympathy with much of the teaching in their holy books; by saying, that he came to restore their systems to purity, while he delivered his countrymen from idolatry. But though, perhaps, thus much might be conceded by all, far more by a firm believer in the Bible, it may be firmly doubted whether the word "plagiarism" is one suited to the case; or whether, so far as Mahomet was a plagiarist, he could have exerted any influence. If he had merely transferred passages from our Scriptures to his, merely adopted formal doctrines which they set forth in living power, to mix them with his own notions,

one cannot believe that he ever would have moved the heart of a single nation or of a single man. A teacher may, indeed, exercise a much greater power by reviving what is old, than by inventing what is new; but to revive a principle he must have been penetrated by it, it must have taken possession of him, it must have inspired his whole being; otherwise he could never impart it to others. Something of this sort must have been the case with Mahomet; and therefore his plagiarisms, great as they may have been, do not account for his success.

IV. The same answer may serve for those persons of a very different temper who are disposed to dwell with complacency upon passages in the Koran which contain just and benevolent sentiments, and who believe that these were not merely transferred from Jewish or Christian sources, but actually exhibited the heart of the writer. We may admit the existence of such sentiments; we need not, in the least, wish to represent them as insincere or hypocritical; we may believe that they have exercised a real influence over the minds of Mussulmans, who constantly repeat them, and look upon them as proceeding from a prophet of God. But we cannot believe that mere phrases and sentiments, be they ever so good, nay, even if they did not occur in the midst of any that are fond or trivial and contradictory to themselves, could have wrought a deep conviction into the minds of men previously indisposed to them. A precept may be of vast weight when we have bowed to the

preceptor; otherwise it is weak: it may be respected and praised, but it will not be followed; nothing will be abandoned for the sake of it.

V. There would seem then to be far more plausibility in the opinion of those who attribute great weight to the character of Mahomet itself, believing that however it may have been mixed of good and evil qualities, it was of a kind to act mightily upon his own countrymen, and through them upon mankind. He has been spoken of as one of the great governing and leavening minds of the world, one able to stamp his own image upon nations and generations. Men did homage to him, it has been said, as they always will do homage to one who they feel is their master, who is stronger than they, because his convictions are stronger, because he has grappled more with realities, because he has faith in unseen substances, of which they see little more than the shadows. Such assertions may be at variance with many conceptions we have formed of this man, but there is much in his biography to bear them out; there is nothing in them, I believe, to startle any Christian who knows the grounds of his own belief. At what point the strong conviction of a truth which must be divine, which must be given us from above, becomes mixed with self-exaltation, with the desire of showing how wise we are, and of exercising a dominion over others for our own sakes, it is hard to determine in any case. The more we know of ourselves, the more we shall understand how it is possible to vibrate between the certainty we have of principles, which for the

sake of our moral being we cannot part with, and a positiveness about notions which we have grounded upon them. When the conscience is clear, when the man is lowly, when he has been subdued by discipline, the opposition seems clear to him as between day and night; the delusion of his own heart is manifested to him by the light which God has kindled there. But amidst the noise of human applause the distinction which was so definite vanishes, the precious and the vile become hopelessly mingled. Such personal experiences, which all have had in a greater or less degree—which earnest and thoughtful young men especially require to be schooled in, because it depends upon the way they use them whether strong and clear and bright impressions in their minds shall destroy their docility, shall make them merely utterers of some new notion, or shall ripen into blessed discoveries of that which is true—these experiences, I say, may help us to read the biographies of men who have had a great influence upon the world, with a kindlier and truer feeling. Their impressions were, doubtless, more overpowering than ours, their conflicts greater, their temptations severer. It is hard to say, that because they called themselves inspired, they meant to deceive; that language might be the language of humility, not of arrogance—the confession that every good gift, above all every illumination respecting any invisible reality, cometh from the Father of Lights. Not in this conviction, but in that pride which forgets Him—in the desire to be something in themselves—do we trace the

beginning of all imposture; in the blending of the two together, the melancholy mixture which religious systems present to one who studies them in themselves or in their effects. I am far then from wishing to deny that Mahomet's character may have met with unfair treatment at the hands of Christians. And it is, without doubt, one of the most noticeable circumstances in the history of his religion, that his own person should have been so much bound up with it; that every caliph or sultan who has reigned over any tribe of his followers should have reigned in his name; that the recollection of a man should have so much more power than even the book which Mussulmans regard with such profound reverence; that the honour of a human chieftain should so markedly distinguish a religion which looks upon man as separated by an immeasurable distance from the object of his worship. But this last remark shows that the person and character of Mahomet, important as they may have been in their practical influence, cannot satisfactorily explain the charm by which his religion worked its way. In fact, it is one of the anomalies which requires to be accounted for, that a human leader should win this reverence. He himself declared and felt that he was nothing but a witness for God; his followers received and honoured him as holding that office. All the worth he had in him was derived from that of which he testified. When he began consciously to take up any other position it was one of weakness. We may consider Mahomet a hero if we please; we may regard the reverence

for him as a proof of men's tendency in all circumstances to worship heroes; but we cannot, without denying the plainest facts of the case, say that the success of his doctrine was a consequence of this disposition. His teaching was emphatically the denial of that worship; every Mahometan sword was drawn to prove that it was false, and to put it down.

VI. It might seem to follow inevitably, from what has just been said, that the Monotheism of Mahomet, and his hatred of idolatry, constituted the strength and vitality of his system. This opinion has often been maintained, and a reader of the history is continually tempted to adopt it. As we follow any of the earlier conquerors through Persia, through Egypt, through the Greek empire, we feel that the enthusiasm of the chief and of the soldier is connected with what they believe to be the destruction of false worship, the carrying out of the first and second Commandments. All the enemies of the Prophet are regarded alike as infidels, because all are thought to have raised something *created* into the place and glory of the Creator. The belief that nothing in the earth, nothing in the heavens, not even light, is a symbol of God; that not even man himself can be looked upon in any other character than as a minister of the one Supreme Being, evidently inspires every enterprize. In the strength of it they destroy temples, idols, priests, plunder cities, make slaves of their inhabitants, turn their children into soldiers of the Crescent. All this is true, and yet I

think no considerate person will suppose that mere opposition to the grossest forms of false worship could give nerve to any arm, far less permanence to any society. If Monotheism means the *not* believing in many gods, it could, as little as the other causes we have enumerated, be the root of the Mahometan faith and the Mahometan power.

VII. But these sweeping conquests of Mahomet are susceptible of yet another interpretation, which has sometimes been applied to the whole history of their dominion: they may be regarded as the righteous judgments of God upon guilty nations, whether these were the idolaters of India, the fire-worshippers of Persia, the corrupted Greek, or the Visigoth. It is difficult, I should think, for any person really taking the Bible as his guide, nay, for any person recognising a Divine Providence at all, not to look upon every great earthquake which has shaken kingdoms as a Divine visitation; not to see a Divine hand regulating outward circumstances, and the wills of men. Nor can we go so far without going farther, and asking what the state of those nations was on which the scourge descended? If we pursue the inquiry fairly in this case, we shall be led, it seems to me, to the discovery of the real ground of the Mahometan might, and perhaps to regard the continuance of that might through so many ages not wholly as a calamity. In the Christian nations which were permitted to fall under the armies of Islam, almost as much as in those which were avowedly Pagan, the sense of a Divine Almighty Will, to which all

human wills were to be bowed, had evaporated amidst the worship of images, amidst moral corruptions, philosophical theories, religious controversies. Notions about God more or less occupied them; but God Himself was not in all their thoughts. The awe of an Absolute Eternal Being, to be obeyed as well as to be confessed, was passing away in some—had scarcely been awakened in others. The soldiers of Mahomet said, by their words and acts, "God verily is, and man is his minister, to accomplish his will upon earth." This we shall find was the inspiring thought in the warriors of the Crescent—this gave them valour, subordination, discipline. This, where it encountered no like or equal feeling in the minds of those among whom they came, made them invincible. We must not be content with talking of their armies; here was the life of their armies. We must not speak of men's readiness to receive an imposture; in yielding to this assertion they were bowing to a truth. This was no verbal copy from ancient records; it may have been the oldest of all verities, but it was fresh and new for every one who acted upon it. It was no mere phrase out of a book—no homage to a mortal hero—no mere denial of other men's faith. Let us go yet farther and say, It was a mercy of God that such a witness, however bare of other supporting principles, however surrounded by confusions, should have been borne to His Name, when His creatures were ready, practically, to forget it. The first Mahometan conquest, the continued Mahometan dominion, prove the assertion "God is" to be no dry

proposition, but one which is capable of exercising a mastery over the rudest tribes, of giving them an order, of making them victorious over all the civilisation and all the religion which has not this principle for its basis.

I think that most persons studying the history of Mahometanism without prejudice, will feel that this is the principle which confronts them at every turn, and to which every thing else is subordinate. And if so, the consideration is surely a very important one for our purpose. We are told that the mere theological part of religious systems is only a loose, flimsy drapery for certain maxims of morality, or certain ideas about the nature and spiritual destinies of man. How does the study of Mahometanism bear out this opinion? Is it a collection of moral maxims which has been its strength? Is it some theory or conception about the nature of man? Precisely the opposite assertion is true. All mere maxims, all mere ideas about the nature of man, have proved weak and helpless before this proclamation of a living and Eternal God. The theological transcendent principle is just the one which has stood its ground, which has re-appeared age after age, which the most ignorant warriors felt was true and mighty for them, for which no cultivation has provided any substitute. We are told, again, that the character of particular localities and races determines what shall be the character of a theology; that that only is universal which concerns the laws of outward nature or the life of man. How does the history of Mahometanism bear out this

opinion? Let it be granted that the soil of Arabia was one on which it was fitting that such a doctrine as that of Mahomet should be first preached: let it be allowed that the Semitic race has been especially distinguished from every other by an interest in what is purely Divine, by a comparative indifference to what is human. But here is an assertion which tribes the most remote from this are compelled to recognise; which establishes itself in India, in Syria, in Egypt, in Greece. And it is remarkable that, while numerous sects and parties have been called into existence by questions respecting the proper successors of Mahomet, or the interpretation of the Koran, the Divine principle among them has been the uniting one. It is said again, that the great doctrines which have been embodied in religious systems are the creations of the religious principle in man; that his faith moulds the object which it worships: in other words, that what is called theological truth is but some outward expression of our feelings or habits of mind. Look again at the history of Mahometanism; consider the facts steadily: there are none to which the supporters of this theory should more gladly appeal. They can find no instance of a race of which faith in an unseen object has been more characteristic. "Faithful" is the very name by which the Islamite warriors proclaim themselves to the world. But what was the nature of this faith? It meant nothing, it was nothing, except so far as it asserted a Being *not* dependent on itself; the ground of man's being; one of whom he was the minister,

not the Creator. The Mahometan believed that the God whom he worshipped must have revealed Himself—that man could not have discovered Him. He went forth to beat into powder all gods which he supposed man had invented. Take away these characteristics from his faith and it vanishes, with all the doings which were the fruits of it.

One question still remains to be considered before I close this Lecture. May not the principle which Mahometanism embodies be left to the protection of the system which it seems to have created for itself? —We must look into Mahometan history for the answer.

When I spoke to you of the great power by which the Mahometan soldier was carried along in his enterprizes, of the principle which gave him strength and endurance, you may have wondered that I did not dwell more upon the rewards which were promised to him after death, upon the Paradise of sensual felicity for which the brave man was encouraged to hope. I did not allude to this motive, because I do not believe that it was the one by which the Mahometan hosts were really inspired. The mighty conviction that they were then, at that very moment, called by God to a work—that they were His witnesses and were the ministers of His vengeance, was, I believe, immeasurably more effective than any dreams, were they ever so gross and palpable, of what might be given to them hereafter. When they had already cast themselves away to live or die, they had a sense of immortality which no such

visions could impart, which alone made them credible.

But when the Mahometan was at peace, the belief of a mighty Sovereign to whom he was doing homage, no longer sufficed him; he began to ask himself what he was living for? To the multitude these sensual promises were a tolerable answer. These were the things to be desired; for these, by whatsoever means the Koran or its interpreters prescribed, if they were in earnest, they were to labour. Some, with higher apprehensions, would feel that such rewards were not satisfying; they would explain away the language of Mahomet, and pursue the practices, to which the others submitted in hope of earthly gratifications, that they might attain the knowledge or vision of God. The former would fall into gross moral corruptions, the latter would indulge in philosophical speculations—would found sects—would substitute theories and notions for that Being in whose name their fathers had fought. This has actually been the case, and hence it has been proved that Mahometanism can only thrive while it is aiming at conquest. Why? Because it is the proclamation of a mere Sovereign, who employs men to declare the fact that he is a Sovereign, and to enforce it upon the world. It is not the proclamation of a great moral Being who designs to raise His creatures out of their sensual and natural degradation; who reveals to them not merely that He is, but *what* He is—why He has created them —what they have to do with Him. Unless this

mighty chasm in the Mahometan doctrine can be filled up, it must wither day by day—wither for all purposes of utility to mankind; it can leave nothing behind but a wretched carcase, filling the air with the infection of its rottenness.

For, secondly, see how that which gave all the dignity and glory to this system becomes, from its want of some other element, the very cause of its degradation. The absolute government of the unseen Being had presented itself to the Mussulman, in every age, in the absolute, visible government of his caliph or sultan. While the divine feeling was strong and alive, the subjection to the human ruler was an affectionate, dutiful, entire submission. The ruler was, in very deed, the centre of his warriors. He felt towards them as a protector, sharing their toils, bound to the same master, enduring hardships in the same cause. But the battle over, he becomes the absolute monarch in the midst of his seraglio—they are merely his slaves. There is no such connection between him and the being whom he worships as permanently to check this tendency—to make the monarch feel that he is set over them to do them good, or the subjects that they have an appeal against him to a higher Ruler.

The very nature of the Ottoman government—and that government is the perfect developement of the Mahometan idea—excludes the possibility of orders and gradations in society. Its strength lies in all being simply subjects of the one ruler, holding their offices not in virtue of any hereditary

ranks or privileges, but only at his pleasure. When therefore the one principle which quickened the whole society waxes feeble, of necessity it becomes the most intolerable of despotisms. Elsewhere there is a balance and conflict of powers, which even in the dreariest periods produces struggles or paroxysms of life; here, if the monarch do not inspire his people with strength, all is dead. And the same cause which destroys what may be called the family bonds of civil society, destroys equally the family itself. Polygamy is no accident of Mahometanism: a careful consideration of the system will show that it must fall to pieces the moment any reformer shall attempt to remove this characteristic of it.

But again, the first principle of Mahometanism wanting the support of some other which it does not acknowledge, must change, and is continually changing, into one which is the counterfeit and direct opposite of itself. The belief of a living, acting Will passes into the acknowledgment of a dead necessity, a Fate, against which there is no struggling, which drives the soul not to energy for some great object, but to indifference, languor, and the submission that means despair. Oftentimes indeed the patience of a Turk must even yet awaken our homage and our shame. Joyfully would we confess that God has not suffered the true principle to be wholly extinguished by its bastard product. But we would draw from that confession not a pretext for leaving this, or any feeble and beautiful plant of a better soil, to the

hot-bed which has always impeded its growth, and now threatens to stifle it altogether; but a certain hope that it is intended to receive culture from without, and that, by help of that culture, it may yet blossom and bear fruit abundantly.

These remarks may prepare us to take notice of one great fact in the history of Mahometanism, which is the connecting link between it and the other systems of which I propose to speak hereafter.

I have talked of the victories of the Crescent in different quarters of the globe, and it is not easy to exaggerate the greatness of those victories. Yet we all know they were not complete; they did not exterminate that which they were meant to exterminate. I do not speak now of the resistance which this great power encountered from the hammer of the Mayor of Paris, or from the heroes in the Asturian mountains. I do not speak of anything which is directly connected with Christianity. I mean that the most remarkable of the old polytheistic faiths, though crushed, were not cast out; that some of the countries which yielded to Mahometans are not Mahometan. It behoves us to inquire into the meaning of this fact—to ask ourselves, what there was in their doctrines, compounded of all strange elements, sanctioning so many fearful crimes, for which the simple and purer Mahometan faith could provide no satisfaction. We may find that convictions which the Mahometan trampled down, do as much require recognition as those which he enforced;

that man has demands for himself which will not be satisfied by being told that he is the servant of an absolute Will—demands which must, somehow or other, find their explanation, must in some way or other be reconciled with that great truth.

I will not anticipate the nature or the results of that inquiry; but I hope we may gather something from the one in which we have been engaged. You have found a set of men brought up in circumstances altogether different from yours, holding your faith in abhorrence, who say in language the most solemn and decisive, "Whatever else we part with, this is needful to us and to all human beings —the belief that God IS—the recognition of Him as a living personal Being." You have seen this faith growing weak for a time, and everything else growing weak with it; you have seen it re-appearing, finding a new set of champions to assert it, compelling nations to bow before it. Be sure that here is something which the heart and reason within you have need of—which they must grasp. Be quite sure, that if you give them in place of it any fine notions or theories; if you feed them with phrases about the beautiful or the godlike, when they want the source of beauty, the living God; if you entertain them with any images or symbols of art or nature when they want that which is symbolised; if you talk about physical laws when you want the lawgiver, of mechanical properties when you want him who set them in motion, of secret powers when you want him who acts by them and

upon you, you are cheating yourselves—cheating mankind. Remember further, that the acknowledgment of this Being may imply much more than the Mahometan perceived, but that it does imply *that* which he perceived. If such an One is, His will must be the law of the universe. Every creature in the universe must be in a right or wrong position, must be doing his work well or failing in it, as he yields himself to this will, or as he resists it. And let us not fancy that the early Mahometan was entirely mistaken as to the way in which this will ought to be obeyed. He may not have understood *what* enemies he had to fight with, what weapons he had to wield, but he did discover that the life of man is to be a continual battle, that we are only men when we are engaging in a battle. He was right that there is something in the world which we are not to tolerate, which we are sent into it to exterminate. First of all, let us seek that we may be freed from it ourselves; but let us be taught by the Mussulman that we shall not compass this end unless we believe, and act upon the belief, that every man and every nation exists for the purpose of chasing falsehood and evil out of God's universe.

## PART I.—LECTURE II.

*Character of the Hindoo Faith. The Brahmin. Worship of the Pure Intelligence. The popular re-action. Vishnu and Siva. Relations of the English Government to Hindooism.*

THE remarks which I made at the close of my last Lecture will prepare you to expect that I should speak in the present of HINDOOISM. That faith has been brought into conflict with Mahometanism, has succumbed to it, and yet has maintained its ground, leaving the victorious religion the religion of a small minority. Though it may pretend to an antiquity which it does not possess, it has certainly lasted three thousand years. The language in which its holy books are composed is the mother-tongue—if I may use that phrase in its literal, rather than its ordinary sense—of the Greek, the Latin, and the dialects of our Gothic ancestors; consequently, of nearly all which are spoken in Western Europe at this day. From this fact it might, I think, be inferred, if other evidence were wanting, that the mythologies of these nations could be traced to an Indian source. But there is abundant evidence, so much as to have misled those scholars who were first struck with it into a forgetfulness of the important historical principle, that we cannot determine the character of nations, or of their belief, merely by finding the point from which

they started; that each must be studied in itself, and in its own utterances, and that we gain only a secondary aid in our investigations when we have the means of affiliating it to some other. That this mistake was committed by some of the great Orientalists of the last century, I think is now generally acknowledged; they seemed to suppose that they could learn more of the Greeks from Sanscrit books than from their own. But an extravagance which is natural to all discoverers does not make the discovery itself less valuable; in fact, we are only beginning to appreciate its importance. The more practically we learn to sympathise with our fellow-men in all countries and in all ages, to cultivate such sympathy for our own sake and for theirs, and for the glory of God, the more will all such hints respecting the relationship between different nations be reflected on and prized. And this remark suggests another and much weightier reason, why a Boyle Lecturer should address himself to the subject of Hindooism, and why we all should take an interest in it. It is the faith, to say the least, of between eighty and ninety millions of people, subjects of the British Empire. By conquests scarcely paralleled for rapidity in the annals of the world, we have obtained supremacy over them, and by civil policy we have tried to preserve it. As to the right character of this policy there has been the greatest variety of opinion; but I think intelligent men are now well agreed, that whatever it be, it must be grounded upon a knowledge of the character, institutions, faith of the people who are to be

influenced by it. Civilians, military officers, and missionaries in India, have exerted themselves to acquire this knowledge, and to make it available for us. Their theories, as well as their facts, when they seem most contradictory, are worthy of study and of comparison; they may all help us in finding the principle of Indian life and belief, and that principle, when we apprehend it, may make the differences in their observations and opinions more intelligible.

There are, unquestionably, considerable difficulties in the investigation. This ancient people is strictly speaking without a history. "No date of a public event,"—I use the words of Mr. Elphinstone,—"can be fixed before the invasion of Alexander; no connected relation of the national transactions can be attempted until after the Mahometan conquest." Yet it would seem that we were in the greatest need of such records to connect the phenomena which offer themselves to the eye of the traveller in this day with the early books which are still regarded with the profoundest veneration. A Hindoo will sometimes tell us in wild language that he acknowledges three hundred millions of gods; he means, of course, that the number is indefinite, that any object or power in nature, any heroic man, may be a god. And those who trace Oriental extravagance in such a description, will, nevertheless, remember, to have heard of various beings who are acknowledged objects of Hindoo adoration —of Brahma the Creator, of Vishnu the Preserver, of Siva the Destroyer, of Indra, the Lord of the

Elements, of the fearful goddess Devi, of the beautiful hero Krishna, and a multitude more. Yet learned and trustworthy critics, Asiatic as well as European, confidently affirm that the ground of the Brahminical faith is Monotheistic; that One Being is assumed in the earliest of the sacred books to be the origin of all things; that this was no lazy, inoperative tenet, but penetrated the whole system of worship, and the life of the worshipper. Putting such facts and such statements together, you might be ready to conclude that there was no real identity between the faith of one of these periods and of the other; that either by conquest, or some strange process of degeneracy, the character and feelings of the people had become so changed as to make the notion of one Hindoo or Brahminical religion a mere delusion. But many considerations will show us that this opinion, however plausible, is untenable. I have said that the early Vedas, composed, perhaps, fifteen hundred years before the time of Christ, be their tenets what they may, are still regarded with unbounded veneration by the religious men among the Hindoos. The Menu code or institute, which is probably about six hundred or seven hundred years younger than these, and which indicates some, though not radical, alterations of practice and opinion during the interval, must still be the great study of every English jurist who wishes to understand the grounds of Hindoo law and life at the present day. Five or six centuries after the composition of this code the troops of Alexander crossed the Indus. The picture which the Greeks

give us of society as they observed it, accords with that which we gain from the earlier native source; but, what is still more to the point, it also accords in essentials with what our own countrymen tell us of India now. With the advantages we possess from the actual occupation of the country, from being able to examine parts of it which the Greeks never visited, and from modern habits of critical investigation, we must see many things much more clearly than they did; and therefore, even when their reports are different from the present state of things, it is not necessary to assume that there must have been really a great change. It is hardly needful, however, to take this remark into consideration, for we are assured, by those who have the best opportunities of judging, that one of the most remarkable features of Hindoo life, the constitution and government of the villages, is exhibited with surprising faithfulness in narratives which were derived from observations made more than two thousand years ago. Such permanence in social habits would surely lead us to expect something corresponding to it in the inward convictions of a people; and we are not left to conjecture. The soldiers of Alexander found a set of men whose great business was contemplation, who submitted to numerous privations and austerities that they might pursue it more effectually. The Brahmins they found were the leading class in the country; military, agricultural, commercial occupations were all subordinate to theirs—all society had, in fact, organised itself in conformity with their ideas.

The Greek fancied they had less to do with civil affairs than we know, from their own code, that they must have had. But the general conception which he formed of the Brahmins was singularly accurate. He called them Sophists, a name which, in his own country, often denoted mere sceptics; here it had no such signification; it implied that the Brahmins were not merely priests, such as were to be seen elsewhere; that their first business was *study*, and that the purely sacerdotal office was secondary to this. As the accounts which the Greek writers give of the objects of Hindoo worship are meagre, and evidently distorted by the desire of finding resemblances to their own mythology, we might suppose that, for our purpose, we could not learn much from them. But I believe we shall find that their report of the Brahmins is, in fact, the key to the whole system; one which, if we use it rightly, will enable us to discover its leading characteristics, and to understand, however little we may be able to trace, the varieties of form which it has assumed.

The name of Brahmin at once suggests that of Brahm. The resemblance is no accidental one; nor does it merely signify that the Brahmin is the minister or priest of Brahm. The connection is of a far more intimate and wonderful kind. The learned man, the contemplative sage, aspires to be one with him whom he adores—to lose his own being in his. And what is this being? He is the Absolute Intelligence; the Essential Light. Rest, Contemplation: this is his glory, his perfection.

You will feel at once the direct opposition between this idea and that of the Mahometan. I bring it before you just at this point, that you may see how much we may impose upon ourselves by the word Monotheism, which is often used as if it were common to these two faiths, at least in their origin; that you may see at the same time in what sense it has been honestly and rightly applied to Hindooism. Mahometanism began with a Prophet, but we saw the Prophet soon merged in the Khalif or Sovereign. This Sovereign was the organ of a mighty Will, which had called all things into existence, and of whom all men are servants. He fulfils his service in perpetual conflict; only in such conflict does his faith make its meaning intelligible. There are no natural gradations of society, no hereditary ranks; all are merely officers holding their position under the one ruler. The priest is an insignificant person. Strictly speaking, there is no priesthood. The dervish or learned man may be an important adviser of the Sovereign: in times of quiet he may promote learning, or become the head of a sect; but when he is most regarded it is only as an interpreter of the Divine Will. The first principle of Mahometanism would be violated if he aspired to be himself divine. Here, on the contrary, the priest, the student, the beholder is judge, lawgiver, everything. The God is an Intelligence, not a Will—himself a higher priest—a more glorious student—a more perfect contemplator. You can scarcely conceive a mandate issuing from such a being: all things must flow from him as light

from the sun, or thoughts from a musing man. Such an idea is ever implied in Hindooism; but it may not have been frequently expressed; it may sometimes have been contradicted, in the earliest stage; for the wrapt student, feeling it his highest calling and privilege to meditate on an Absolute Being in silence and awe, will have had such a practical reason for not confounding him with the *world* around, as no theoretical consistency could outweigh. It was far otherwise with the feeling of a relation between the *human* worshipper and the object of his adoration. This feeling was not resisted, but strengthened by his practical discipline. He was taught that he was intended to rise into the closest communion, nay, into actual identity with the Divinity: to realise such a state was the effort of his existence.

The Brahmin believed that there was in *man* a capacity for such intercourse or absorption as this; but surely not in all men. Some are merely animal: there must be a race intended for this high converse, there must be a race excluded from it. One would not say, however, that the highest sage is the only man who is not merely animal. The warrior must have something of the higher diviner faculty; it may be cultivated and ripened in him. Even the merchant, the traveller into other lands, must be more than a merely earthly creature. These orders of men should be kept apart from the lowest of all—the mere human animal, the Sudra. Yet the purely contemplative man should not be allowed too much intercourse even with these. He may

educate them to be such men as they are meant to be, but he must keep himself and his race pure: this race must be carefully trained to be the model of humanity—to rise above humanity—by perpetual meditation on the unseen Brahm.

The so-called laws or institutes of the Hindoos are all designed for this purpose. They are, properly speaking, a system of education or discipline; a method of fitting the highest man for fulfilling his vocation, and all the others for preserving their proper relation to him. The idea of a separation between the twice-born man and the merely animal man, is the fundamental one; all the arrangements are for the purpose of giving effect to this idea—all other distinctions are secondary to it. The twice-born man must, by certain services or sacraments, the principal of which is reading the Vedas, maintain his relation to the unseen object. He must practise certain plans for lessening his dependence on mere material gratifications; he must cultivate rather the passive than the active qualities. In the progress of ages the two middle classes seem to have disappeared, or at least this is the prevailing Brahminical opinion. The system has undergone other modifications, till at length, in some places at least, it has so adapted itself to the different pursuits and occupations of men, as to offer an excuse for the European notion, that it was invented in an early stage of society by some legislator, who observed that labour must be divided in order to be successful, and that there is likely to be an hereditary aptitude for particular professions or trades.

Such a notion seems to be refuted by the fact that, according to the early arrangement of castes, there was no accurate division of employments; that persons of the same order were allowed to perform many which were unlike and incompatible. Nor does another plausible hypothesis, that the Brahmins were a conquering tribe and the Sudras a conquered one, seem to be more tenable. Those who have the best opportunities for comparing them, say that they can discover no such differences between them as would warrant the supposition of their belonging to a different race, none greater than are naturally produced by meaner occupations and a sense of degradation during a long course of years. But the great objection to this opinion is, that the Sudras are not in any sense slaves, and never can have been such; the Greeks were surprised to find all classes in India free citizens in some sense, in however low a one. So that probably we cannot get much further than the religious principle as the basis of the distinction—than the idea, I mean, that there is a tendency in men to become purely animal, and that there is a race of men in which this tendency is realised and perpetuated; that there is in man that which may be raised to fellowship with the Divine; and that there is a race in which this capacity is exhibited and transmitted.

In spite then of the fact, that there are in the very earliest Hindoo Vedas prayers and hymns to light and fire, and to many natural powers, nay, though the liturgical part of them consists mainly

of such prayers, we may fully admit the assertion, that the Brahmin is seeking after One Divine, unseen object; that he is only asking these different creatures to tell him what that object is, and how He is to be found; nay, that his aim in his whole life and discipline is to purify himself from outward, sensible things, that he may approach nearer to this One Source of Illumination.

But then how can we explain the fact, that men setting this end before them, looking upon the most mysterious powers in the universe as at best ladders to ascend to the highest region—ladders which the wise men could generally, in time, throw away—should have become so utterly entangled in sensible, outward idolatry as the modern Hindoo seems to be? The explanation often given, that the ordinary gods are but the gods of the vulgar, that the learned man has altogether another view of them which he keeps to himself, is quite unsatisfactory. For the point we want to ascertain is this, how the Brahmin came to suppose that the divers and manifold beings of whom the Hindoo Pantheon consists, could be helps to the discovery or the presentation of the One Being; how he could possibly be induced to reverse the whole order and object of his studies and discipline; to introduce variety, that he might suggest the idea of unity; to bring in a host of visible forms, that he might lead his disciples more certainly to that which is beyond their senses. I do not deny the possibility of such a scheme, but the origin and the steps of it should be explained. If a modern Brahmin confesses that he attaches no

importance to the things to which he seems to attach the greatest, we may accept his testimony against himself. Still more willingly we may believe one who says that he loves the simple faith which he thinks has departed, and that he will spend his life in efforts to restore it. But we cannot take the witness of either respecting their fathers. The process by which they arrived at one strange conclusion after another may have been as simple and natural a one as that by which their traditions are discarded, or that by which they are traced to a deliberate purpose of imposture.

And this, I believe, is actually the case. While the Brahmin was learning, by various arts, to practise abstraction of spirit; was searching, by various helps, to arrive at the perception of the Perfect One; he felt that the light, the intelligence which entered into his own heart—that which raised him above his fellows—that which enabled him to see mysteries, must be the great expression of the Divine Being. Brahm becomes Brahma; the light which flows from the source of light, the wisdom which comes from the fount of wisdom is that which declares him—this is his Name. In that character the initiated disciple is to worship him: no sacrifices need be offered to him, no temples need be raised to him. It is the inward and purified intellect which does him homage. A very sublime conception, you may be inclined to say; one which it is no wonder that enlightened Brahmins in our day should wish to reproduce.

But imagine yourselves in the school where this

sublime doctrine was taught; look at the self-satisfied, self-glorified person who is proclaiming it; see how he has gone on, step by step, till, from a profound idea of some awful, absolute Being, he has passed into the habitual conviction that this Being is himself; he has become his own God. Mark what contempt he manifests for persons about him, what utter inhumanity has grown out of this notion that he is the very perfection of humanity, that he is above it. Suppose an earnest, enthusiastic disciple, struck with the contradiction, saying to himself, "Is this the devout, the self-losing, absorbed Brahmin whom I was taught to wonder at—whose teaching at first seemed to me so sublime?" In the tumult of his feelings, in the sadness of his disappointment, he goes forth from the school into Nature. What a change he finds there! What a sense of refreshment, freedom, calmness, penetrates through his whole being! Surely he has been living till this time in a close, pent-up atmosphere, thinking only of himself; ever hoping, and hoping in vain, to find his God in himself. But is he not here? What a wonderful order there is through this wide universe; an order of day and night; of seasons of heat and seasons of rain; an order in the planets over our heads; an order in the growth of the flowers at our feet; an order in the overflowings of the mighty river. Yes, his name is the Preserver! Conceive of him under that name—worship him under that name—call him Vishnu: bid men rejoice that they have such an One caring

for them. The name, perhaps, had been known before in the Brahminical school. It had been one thought, among many, that Brahma was the preserver of things: now it becomes THE name. Hundreds of hearts are ready to welcome it: even the poor Sudra can look up, and feel that it has a sound of blessing to him. And now the older worship becomes, comparatively, obsolete; the young reformer has prevailed. The Brahminical order must take up his doctrine, and proclaim it, and reconcile it as they can with that which they held before: if they do not so, a sect of Vishnu worshippers will form themselves—men will go out into the deserts and proclaim this faith, without respect to the laws of family or caste at all.

In some such way as this, I conceive, the popular Vishnu worship may have supplanted the original Brahma worship. It would be surely hard to say that the alteration was in itself for the worse; yet the effect of it must, undoubtedly, have been to withdraw the idea of divinity from the inner sanctuary in which it had dwelt; to bring it forth into the world. Then temples would be raised, the fruits of the earth offered, with songs and symbols, to the great Preserver. But soon there will have been a fearful re-action against this kind of service. How could the mere feeling of a beneficent Guardian of the Earth help men who were tormented with a sense of inward evil? What was there in such a Being at all corresponding to the dark visions which continually rose before them, whether they looked behind or before, to the

past or the future? But was there nothing in Nature which did correspond to these inward agonies, which seemed to be the very echo of them? Were there no frightful floods and earthquakes — was there not a continual process of destruction going on in the universe? Is not death the mighty king to whom all must do homage? Poor worshippers of Vishnu, how miserably you are striving to hide the realities of the world from your eyes—to strew garlands over the grave! You have never yet dared to pronounce the real name: it is Siva the Destroyer. If you know your own state, and what you have to fear, you will invoke that name—you will propitiate that divinity. And do not think to approach him with such oblations as are signs of plenty and gladness. It is blood he craves for; the blood of your children and of yourselves. No sacrifices but these can appease his wrath, or abate the misery which he is sending to you, and designing for you. Here was another deep conviction working in the heart of the Hindoo, and destined to produce the most fearful fruits, from generation to generation. The Brahmin could not allay it—could not reduce it under his old notion of the Brahma, the one celestial Intelligence, who spoke only in the Wise. The Siva sect rose up in fierce antagonism to the Vishnu sect. He must endeavour to bring the different ideas into reconciliation; to assign the Brahma, the Vishnu, the Siva, each a part in the arrangement of Nature, and in the different ages of the universe. Religious books are composed,

some with the Vishnu, some with the Siva element predominant in them; the former with a gracious, the latter with a stern, forbidding aspect; the first not denying the dark principle—only keeping it in the back-ground; the latter doing homage to the Preserver, but confessing the greater might of the Destroyer.

Soon the unsatisfied heart feels another necessity. If it be true (and can it be denied?) that the Power which divides and annihilates has such a direct influence over the destinies of the world, may not the Preserver yet have somewhere an undisturbed reign; and may he not descend from that region, at certain periods, to claim his rights over this earth too—to create again that which has perished? Is there not a principle of Restoration implied in Preservation; nay, in Destruction itself? The animals die, but the race survives: and have there not been in the ages of man periods of deepest calamity, when all things seemed to sink in utter ruin, followed by bright sunny days—the earth coming forth out of darkness into light? These must have been the times of Vishnu's descent. The animals, we have been told, all exhibit some side or aspect of the divinity; may have been, originally, portions of it. In these he may have appeared. Men may have been able, without becoming absorbed, to behold him, and converse with him. Again, the priest will partly have led the popular conviction, partly have been led by it. He will have arranged the number and method of these Vishnu incarnations, reducing dreams to a

system, and sanctioning the hope that there might be an avatar, which should restore all things.

But these dreams were not sufficient. Was not a kind and gracious Rajah who felt for his poor subjects one in whom the Divinity was more likely to manifest himself, than in any of those creatures, however sacred, of which man is practically the master? Have we not always felt that a man was permitted, in some mysterious way, to contemplate the Divine Being—to become one with him? Why may not He in such a form, so much more beautiful than any other, appear to us? The bright Krishna becomes the centre of innumerable legends. He is felt to be the true form of the divine Deliverer. As other dreadful apparitions rise up beside Siva, and claim the kind of worship which is offered to him —as there comes forth even a Kali to be a patroness of murder, to make strangling a virtue; this image of a friend and protector of the helpless is the more eagerly sought after, and delighted in.

At each step in this process more of the forms and images of outward nature will have been called in, to express the conception of which the heart was full; at each step the theoretic man will have been obliged to incorporate new schemes of the universe, new speculations upon all questions—astronomical, geological, physiological, metaphysical — into his theology, in order to connect the later and more popular outgrowths of it with the original root. Nevertheless, it is certain that, amidst all these definite conceptions and idolatrous forms, the primary Idea of an Inconceivable, Absolute, Unseen

Being, whom it is the highest glory of the holiest man to behold, and in whom he is to be lost, has survived—survived not as a theory of some learned Brahmin, but as so deep and essential an article of popular faith, that all other habitual convictions, nay, the reverence for the Brahminical order itself, which seems worked into the very tissue of Hindoo society, must give place to it. Religious orders, formed without any reference to distinction of castes, shall be followed and reverenced in proportion as this seems to be the end of their existence: the perfectly abstracted Yogi shall be looked upon as greater, because in the way to a higher knowledge, than he who can explain all the order of nature. In fact, in the worst form of what may be supposed modern corruptions we may trace the original feeling at work. The woman who gives up herself to death on her husband's funeral pile, is exhibiting the same deep sense of the necessity of self-abandonment, self-sacrifice, which is implied in the desire of the contemplative man to be absorbed into the Divine Essence.

We have, then, a faith presented to us here, which the more we think of it, the more fairly we consider its apparent anomalies, the more light we receive respecting it from different and contradictory reports, the more heartily and affectionately we sympathise with the feelings of our fellow-men, the more we know of ourselves, will awaken in us the more of reflection, and wonder, and awe. It is the faith not of savages but of men in whose minds respect for learning has occupied all but the highest

place; men whose whole commonwealth is modelled upon the notion, that the seer, the learned man, ought to be at the head—that all other people should look up to him. At the same time, these learned men have not been able to devise a belief at their pleasure for those whom they have governed. Strong necessities have come forth out of the heart of the people, demanding satisfaction—compelling the wise men to remould their system, yet recognising the worth and reality of that higher, older principle, which they seem to set at nought. I do not think it would be easy to find a fairer test of those assertions respecting the religions of mankind which I propose to examine.

The first of them—that there are deep truths implied in each of these systems—receives, it seems to me, abundant confirmation from even the hasty glance we have been able to take of Hindooism. In the midst of the extravagances and horrors which the most favourable testimonies prove it to have brought forth, and which have multiplied, not diminished, as it has expanded, we have been able to trace some convictions so sacred, so bound up in the heart of the people for thousands of years, as to sustain the credit of monstrous fictions, to make tormenting practices endurable; convictions which have been able to create and perpetuate a complicated form of society, and to defy the power of victorious invaders.

But it is affirmed next, that these deep convictions will in time disengage themselves from the theological element in which they dwell; that

theology being only an inadequate attempt to explain the phenomena of the universe. Now, I have been careful that you should notice how much of the Hindoo system *is* an attempt to explain the phenomena of the universe; it was scarcely necessary for me to remark how ineffectual a one. But, if you have followed the course of my observations, still more if you have made observations for yourselves, you will, I think, be convinced that these theories about the world are precisely the non-theological element of the system; precisely that which has been added to the theology, and become a part of it, in consequence of the inability of the Hindoo to distinguish between God and the world. His inward convictions, from first to last, have had reference to the Absolute, Unseen God, and to his relations with man. The drapery of these convictions has been his doctrine about Nature. Nor can that idolatrous, degrading, often filthy drapery ever be cast away, unless it can be shown him that the theological riddles, for which he has been seeking a solution in Nature so long and not finding it—which are bound up with the deepest wants of his heart—can receive their explanation somewhere else.

But, most of all, the notion that all ideas respecting an unseen world, are produced by the religious faculty in man, might seem to receive countenance from the Hindoo records. How active that faculty has been, what worlds it has called into existence, whilst there were no outward transactions to relate or no one to relate them, we have seen. The

Hindoo in action the idlest, is in imagining, dreaming, combining, the most busy of all human creatures. But is this all we have learnt? Have we not found also an assurance in the mind of these people that all the efforts of thought in them must originate in a communication from above, and require fresh communications to meet them? In the thinking, or reasoning, or religious faculty, call it what you will—or, as I should say, in the man's own heart, in his inmost being—have arisen desires and longings after converse with the unseen world, with some living being in that unseen world, with some one between whom and himself he feels there is a relation. His religious books echo the cry; they mutter a half response to it: but the response is only the question thrown into a more definite form. The highest student meditates on the problem, and repeats his own thoughts; or more probably, what some ancient person, who meditated and conversed with the Divinity, said about it; or what some other said that he said. The circle is a very weary one; if we calmly consider it, and what kind of comfort those receive who are ever revolving in it, we shall confess that the Hindoo is right in his belief, that the wisdom of which he sees the image and reflection must speak and declare itself to him; that he cannot always be left to grope his way amidst the shadows which it casts in his own mind, or in the world around him. I ask nothing more than the Hindoo system, and the Hindoo life as evidence that there is that in man which demands a Revelation—that there is *not* that in him which

makes the Revelation. I ask no clearer proof of the fact, that whenever the religious feeling or instinct in man works freely, without an historical revelation, it must beget a system of priestcraft. It must be satisfied by God, or overlaid by man, or stifled altogether.

The question still remains: Is the help to this state of things to come from within the system? I hinted that there are, or have been, Hindoo patriots who have dreamed of bringing back the first state of Brahminism, setting up the Monotheism of the older Vedas, sweeping away the accumulations of centuries. But if the original Brahminism itself contained the great puzzle of all subsequent ages; if the Monotheism of the Vedas admitted the doubt whether man, nay, whether all things might not be a part of the Divinity; if those accumulations of centuries were the inevitable results of anxieties which men could only quell by destroying themselves, it seems somewhat unreasonable to go back to the beginning of a series, every step of which, so far as we can tell, would have to be repeated. Or, if the notion be that some form of Monotheism, not involving the idea of direct connection between God and Man, or God and Nature, might supersede the existing superstition, is it not playing with words to speak of this as a revival or restoration? must it not be simply a denial of the fundamental principle of the whole system? We need not, however, enter upon this subject at present, for both these experiments have been made under every possible advantage. Buddhism, a doctrine, to which

I hope to devote a separate Lecture, may, at least under one of its aspects, be regarded as a formal effort to revive the original Brahminical idea; an effort not without very important results, which have affected a large portion of the world; but which has not displaced Hindooism on its proper soil, and which, I think, we shall find is scarcely the doctrine any modern Hindoo reformer would desire to produce. To the other experiment I have alluded already—it is that of Mahometanism. A considerable number of the Hindoo race were converted to this faith, and profess it to this day. But it could take no hold of the heart of the people, for it solved no one difficulty which was perplexing them; it affirmed a truth which staggered them, and before which they bowed; one, however, which in this form coalesced with scarcely any conditions of their intellectual or of their moral being.

Whether Christianity can do for the Hindoo what these systems have not done, is a question for our future consideration. One or two remarks I would make here which may remove some difficulties from that inquiry, and which seem to arise naturally out of the present subject. I cannot feel surprise that the statesmen and scholars of British India, observing the failure of the Mahometans to overthrow the faith and institutions of this strange people, should have pressed strongly upon their own government the duty of respecting what it had not power to subvert. I cannot believe that an indifference to evils which were continually

before their eyes, or a feeling that the safety of English dominion is the highest of all considerations, can have induced men often of the greatest cultivation and humanity to protest against the efforts which some of their countrymen were making to spread the faith of Europe in the East. It is much pleasanter, and surely more reasonable, to believe that they felt there was something hard-hearted, almost impious, in trampling upon convictions which had struck root into the soil for many thousand years, which had created the whole fabric of society. For such a feeling one is bound to entertain the greatest respect; only I think men generally so clear-sighted must by this time have perceived that there was an important oversight in the inference which they drew from it. No doubt it is a very serious thing to assault the belief, even the prejudices, of any ancient people. But this assault had already been made; every circumstance which brought Englishmen into contact with the Hindoo was a repetition of it. When all nature is peopled with divinities it does not require an adverse theologian to wound the prejudices of the worshipper, —the army commissary, the judge, the ordinary traveller, must interfere with them continually. Above all, when it came to be perceived, as it would of course be in time perceived by any benevolent government, that Englishmen ought not to be settled in a country without communicating to its inhabitants some portion of that knowledge which they possess, or rather, when it was found that a people so eager for information, so quick

in receiving it, as the Hindoos, would not be content until they had learnt the secret of our mechanical achievements, — it was certain that some cherished tenet must be outraged, some express statement in the religious books contradicted, if the teacher of European science should advance beyond his alphabet. Such considerations do not prove that the idea of respecting a people's convictions is a false one; they show only that there are certain accidents of these convictions which we are not only permitted, but obliged, to make light of. Just in proportion to that necessity which is laid upon us for showing the Hindoo that visible things cannot be treated with the reverence which he has been taught to feel for them, should be our desire and determination to preserve him from the danger to which he is certainly exposed, of thinking that all the questionings of his fathers respecting the invisible world had no purpose or meaning. These questionings belong to the most radical portion of the Hindoo mind; in them you see what the Hindoo is, what his existence means, and how he has been able to stamp such an image of himself upon society. To these questionings he owes the activity of his intellect and imagination when all his other tendencies and his outward circumstances would make him indolent; hence have arisen his love of letters and his desire for science. But the time has evidently come when he cannot be questioning merely; he must have answers. I contend that he who is able to give them is not a destroyer, but a preserver: that he will have a right to boast

of having upholden all that was strongest and most permanent in the Hindoo life and character, while English influences in general were, however innocently and inevitably, threatening to undermine them. I concede with equal readiness, that if Christianity do not offer these answers, it cannot make this boast; it must leave to some other instrument the work of regenerating Hindostan. As the question is brought to this test, let us gather up in a few words the enigmas which have tormented the Hindoo so long, and of which, for the sake of his practical life, he demands a solution.

First, he has had the deepest assurance that God must be an Absolute and Living Being, who can be satisfied with nothing less perfect than himself; and yet he has an equally deep conviction that this Absolute and Eternal Being cannot merely live in self-contemplation; that there must be some object in which he sees his image reflected. The thought is expressed with great earnestness and beauty in one of the early Vedas, where Brahm is introduced seeking for the image of himself. The words which are imputed to him express the strong feeling, that a merely solitary, self-seeking, abstracted being would be one whom a man, experiencing his own need of sympathy and fellowship, could not bear to contemplate. The thought expands itself through the whole Hindoo mythology. It utters itself from the beginning in the idea of a Brahma, as well as a Brahm; it gives birth to all the later notions of goddesses dwelling beside the gods. If no voice comes from the secret place to interpret this mighty

contradiction which the learned man has perceived, which the most ignorant Hindoo feels, their thoughts of God and their human life must continue a hopeless maze.

For the perplexity which grows out of this lies close to personal, as well as social, existence. May not man himself be this partner of the Divinity? If he is, what means that deep assurance of a Divinity retired within the sanctity and awfulness of his own nature?—if he is not, what mean these yearnings in the spirit after the knowledge of him; this promise in the heart that it may be attained; this discontent while it is wanting? It is an idle thing to cut this knot by affirming either principle and denying the other; all confusions, theoretical and practical, of the Hindoo arise from the attempt to do this, and from the experience of its impossibility; only if you can show that they have been reconciled, and how, will you lead him to any clearness or freedom.

Again, *man* has this glorious faculty; but a portion of men seem without it. It must dwell in a caste; the rest must be cut off from it. Leave this thought to work, and it will bring forth the fruits which it has brought forth hitherto. The modern Hindoo, with his European culture and science, will be just as contemptuous to all who want his information and intellect as the Brahmins of old; the twice-born notion may change its form, in effect it will be as rampant and tyrannical as ever. You cannot extirpate it, until you justify it—until you can show that some eternal truth lies in the distinc-

tion, and yet that it excludes no human creature; that it asserts the common privilege of Brahmin and Sudra.

Then we come to another set of questions—This Absolute Being, what manner of being is he? If it be true that he stands in some relation to us and the world, in what relation? Is he benignant, or hateful? is he a preserver or destroyer? You cannot answer the question with any vague flourishes of rhetoric. The Hindoo is willing enough to acknowledge a kind and gracious ruler, but the worshipper of Siva meets you with a set of facts. Here is misery, here is death. You must encounter these facts—you cannot blink them. You must be able to say—"I can show that this misery and death do not interfere with the idea of a God of Order, Mercy, Love; I can show it by practical tokens and demonstrations;" otherwise you must leave the sects to fight on for ever, with a tolerable certainty that the darker will in general have the ascendency. Again, the idea of a struggle between life and death, order and disorder, good and evil, and of the victory having been achieved by the God actually descending into the battle-field, and himself taking part in the strife; the idea that he must assume some form which is subject to all the accidents of earthly calamity; this is one which a European may easily scoff at, when he sees it presented to him in the Hindoo stories, and doubtless, he will find many a learned Brahmin who is ready, with more or less reserve, to scoff too, nay, to represent such a notion as quite incompatible with the

higher Brahminical theology. But let it be well considered that a stern demand of the popular conscience carries with it a very mighty witness; if the learned order bows to that demand, allows the people to clothe their inward belief in their own shapes, and reduces their crudities to a system, we may be sure that the faith of the taught is stronger and more vital than that of the teacher; it may be grosser, but it must contain, at least, as real an element. Except this part of the Hindoo conviction can be recognised; unless it can be shown how the belief of such a divine descent is compatible with the highest idea any Brahmin can entertain of the divine perfection, or of man's spirit being intended to ascend to the apprehension and participation of it; I cannot see how the Hindoo race can ever be permanently raised above its present degradation, or how that respect and justice, which have been so passionately demanded for the faith and institutions of centuries, can be practically rendered. Once more—It is, undoubtedly, a right thing in a government to suppress, by actual edict and physical force, human sacrifices. The Roman, tolerant as he was of all polytheistic systems in the provinces, took this course in our own country when he was dealing with the practices of Druidical worship. But neither by this act, nor by establishing municipal institutions in Britain, nor by building and encouraging the natives to build baths and porticoes and temples, did he provide any real substitute for those dark, mysterious thoughts of the unseen world, which had haunted the mind of the

Celt under his oaks, and which found a fearful expression in the sacrifices of children or of men. Those thoughts were the stamina of the British heart; when an external civilisation expelled them, what remained was a feeble colony, groaning for help to the masters who could give it help no longer; a colony which needed to have all its arts and polish destroyed by a people possessing some real faith, some inward strength, that the soil might, by this process, be prepared to bear genuine native fruits. It will be the same with Hindostan, if, while we put down the burnings of widows, and bestow a culture which makes such practices disgusting to its inhabitants, we are not able to show them what is the true form of self-immolation, and how wife, and maiden, and widow—how men, whether called to the contemplative, or active life, may practise it.

I know that I am asking no light thing of any faith when I say, All this it must do if it is to satisfy the heart and conscience of this Asiatic people. But let me ask you, before I conclude, whether a faith which does less than this can satisfy your hearts and consciences? We are in a world of action, and energy, and enterprise, more unlike that dreaming and speculative world we have been hearing of than the soil and climate of England are unlike those of Hindostan. And yet I will be bold to say it, the same thoughts which stir the spirit of the Indian sage and the Indian Sudra, are working secretly beneath all our bustling life, are affecting the councils of statesmen, are entering into the meditations of the

moralists and metaphysicians who most despise theology; in another form, are disturbing the heart of the country peasant, and of the dweller in St. Giles's. They are such questions as these—What do we worship? A dream, or a real Being? One wholly removed from us, or one related to us? Is He a Preserver, or a Destroyer? Has Death explained its meaning to us, or is it still a horrible riddle? It is still uncertain whether Life or Death is master of the world, or how has the uncertainty been removed? What is the evil which I find in myself? Is it myself? Must *I* perish in order that it may perish, or can it be in any wise separated from me? Can I give up myself and yet live? What are these desires which I feel in myself for something unseen, glorious, and perfect? Are they all phantasy, or can they be realised? If they can, by what means? Has He to whom they point made himself known to me? How am I connected with Him? Must I utterly renounce all the things about me, that I may be absorbed into Him, or is there any way in which I can devote them and myself to Him, and only know Him the better by filling my place among them? These are the great human questions; distance in time and space does not affect them; if we are not concerned with them it is because we have not yet ceased to be savages, or because we are returning, through an extreme civilisation, into the state of savages: if they do occupy us, we shall find that there can be but one answer to them for the Englishman and the Hindoo.

## PART I.—LECTURE III.

*Buddhism. Its origin and diffusion. Its various forms. The Lama. Buddhism and its rivals in China.*

IN my former Lectures I have spoken of two religions, very opposite in their character, which have exercised an influence over a large portion of the world—the Mahometan and the Hindoo. The former, we said, could only thrive when it was in action; the proper element of the other was rest. They were brought face to face in Hindostan. The Islamite triumphed, as might have been expected; but there was a passive strength in the Hindoo, which ultimately kept its ground, and enables him to say that his system has endured for three thousand years.

I hinted that it had had struggles with a very different kind of enemy from the Mahometan—with a doctrine in many of its essential peculiarities like its own. That doctrine is the Buddhist, the faith of Thibet, of Siam, of the Burmese Empire, of Cochin China, Japan, Ceylon; the popular, though not the state, faith of China. It is said to number above three hundred millions of people among its disciples; to be, therefore, by far the most prevailing religion which does exist, or ever has existed, in the world. It is surely, then, deserving of earnest investigation; there must be something in it which has given it this wide diffu-

sion. It must express some necessities of man's heart, some necessities of our own.

I propose, in the present Lecture, to inquire what these are; to search for the main principle of Buddhism; to consider in what relation it stands to those religions of which we have spoken; lastly to inquire how it is connected with two other systems which divide with it the Celestial Empire.

A faith which is spread over such a number of countries, many of them very different from each other in outward circumstances, perhaps even in race and early cultivation, must present great varieties, which may seem to make the use of a common name rather a convenient refuge for our ignorance, than a proof that they have really any connection. Undoubtedly our information respecting the different forms of Buddhism is still very imperfect, and we have not the same means of correcting and enlarging it as in the case of countries which have fallen under our own dominion. Ceylon is, I believe, the only British possession in which pure Buddhism is professed. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the intelligent travellers and residents who have given us accounts of what they have seen or heard in the different countries I have enumerated, or what they have read in the books which these countries account sacred, have not been mistaken in believing that the fundamental doctrine is the same in all. The opposition between different views of the system, great as it is, admits, I think, of a tolerably easy explanation; easy at

least, if we do not merely look to find a meaning in the dry records of other people's notions or practices, but compare them with what we have felt and experienced in our own lives. The numerous phases, however, which the system assumes, make it very desirable that we should ascertain from what country it was derived, where we may seek for the first form of it. On this subject there is some, but, I think, now not much difference of opinion. The external arguments which induced Sir William Jones, and some eminent scholars of the last century, to suppose that its native seat could not have been Hindostan, have given way to later and fuller information. There was a stronger internal argument, arising from a comparison of the Brahminical and Buddhist faith, which is also, it seems to me, untenable; but which is well worth considering, and which at once connects the present subject with that of the last Lecture.

We do not adequately describe the condition of Hindostan, by saying that the priests constitute its leading caste. The whole form of society has a sacerdotal stamp upon it; it has moulded itself in conformity with a religious idea; not, as some have fancied, with a professional or mercantile one. And yet, when we look into the meaning of this system it explains itself, by the doctrine that there is in *man* a capacity for beholding the Unseen Being, and that there is in man an animal nature which admits of no Divine converse. The Brahmin is the learned, divine, absorbed man, the end of whose existence is to become one with Brahm.

Brahm himself, I observed, was emphatically an Intelligence, a thinking, not a commanding being—One from whose thoughts all the universe has flowed out, not one by whose will it has been created. He is a higher priest, not in any sense a sovereign; herein standing in the most direct contrast to the object of Mahometan worship. Between, then, the God and the worshipper there is the most direct affinity, which may become identity. Intelligence is to be the characteristic of both. The hereditary caste is to preserve this Intelligence; its discipline to prevent it from being debased by mixture with people in whom the lower nature is predominant, or by contact with things which may make it predominant in themselves.

Now that any set of men should arise in a society constituted like that of Hindostan, to deny the existence of a special caste of priests, might not seem surprising; for one might conjecture that there would be popular reactions against so very strict and exclusive a system. We saw that there had been such popular reactions in Hindostan. They took this form. They demanded a being less abstract than Brahm; not a mere thinking being, but one who should exercise actual influence over the arrangements of Nature and the world—one to whom its good or its evil might be ascribed—one who should not merely cultivate intercourse with an absorbed devotee, but should enter into fellowship with human creatures in their ordinary condition. To such strong workings of popular feeling, to such cries of the popular heart, we traced the

Vishnu and Siva worship, which the priests had been compelled to incorporate with that older principle it seemed striving to subvert. In these cases the priestly caste, whatever rude shocks it may have sustained, nevertheless kept its ground, even in the hearts of the people who assailed it. In fact, nothing proves more clearly than such changes, how much the reverence for a priestly order has been bound up with the sympathies and character of this nation. Neither the awakening of impulses which the priests could not control, nor conquest by such an utterly unsacerdotal people as the Mahometans, have availed to weaken this reverence. The priests have adapted themselves to feelings which they could not subdue; their authority has waxed stronger by a doctrine which threatened to crush it and the popular faith together.

But the Buddhist doctrine cannot in any wise be identified with this kind of movement. The word Buddha, it seems to be admitted on all hands, means Intelligence. That men ought to worship pure Intelligence, must have been the first proclamation of the original Buddhists. The deduction from this must have been, that no caste of priests was necessary for such worship. Could this doctrine have originated on the soil of Hindostan? I do not wonder that thoughtful persons, especially those whose experience made them aware of the facts I have just alluded to, should have said that it could not: that a theory so contrary to the tendencies of Hindoos from generation to generation, must have come from some other region, and been

rudely forced for a time upon this. But, plausible as such an hypothesis may seem, I think I have given you sufficient reason for distrusting it. The sacerdotal principle has indeed struck its roots very deep into the Indian soil, probably from as early a time as any to which we can look back. It has shown itself to be, in some form or other, inseparable from that soil. But it has grown up side by side with another principle, from which, at times, it is hardly distinguishable; the reverence for human intelligence; the disposition to make this the great Brahminical characteristic. It is quite conceivable, then, that from a very early time two sets of men may have co-existed in Hindostan; one composing an hereditary order of priests, the other a mere order of sages or devotees. They co-exist in India to the present day, on terms not probably of sympathy, but also not of absolute opposition or repulsion. The Greek writers allude to two classes seen by the soldiers of Alexander, between whom it has been reasonably enough supposed that a relation similar to this may have subsisted.

Both will alike have aimed at converse with the pure Intelligence, absorption into him. Both therefore will have been far removed from any wish to substitute for this object of worship one of a more visible and earthly character. But different circumstances may have operated to draw each of them into closer connection with that which is visible. The hereditary priest will have maintained his position by taking part in civil employments—will gradually have exhibited less of the higher and more

abstracted character. The devotee will have been reverenced by the people for retaining and carrying out this character. Thus he will have been brought into greater sympathy with them; will have been induced to symbolise the object of his worship, that it might be more apparent to ordinary men. In this way, perhaps, we may account for the appearance of temples, possessing the characteristics of Buddhism, which must have existed in Hindostan from a very early period. Gradually the distinction between these classes will have become more marked and definite. Sages will have appeared calling upon men to adore Buddha in purity and simplicity, denouncing the hereditary caste, denouncing the books upon which they rested their pretensions, acknowledging a modified sympathy with the worship of the people as opposed to that of the Brahmins. In what light these sages were regarded we shall consider hereafter; now it is only necessary to observe that there are the widest differences of opinion among Buddhists respecting the time in which the original sage, the first Buddhist teacher, flourished. That one Sakya Muni appeared in the sixth century before Christ, who produced an effect upon the inhabitants of India of the kind I have just described, and that he left a series of successors, seems to be ascertained. But he was in all probability only the rekindler of feelings, which had been existing previously; only the person who formally set them in opposition to the Brahminical tendencies with which they had been hitherto, though by somewhat loose and fragile links, associ-

ated. Although, then, I would by no means support a paradox which has had some countenance from learned men, but not from the most learned or those who have examined the subject most, that Buddhism was the original doctrine, of which Brahminism was a depravation—though such an opinion has to struggle with the greatest opposition of outward facts, and is, I think, also quite inconsistent with the respective character of the two systems; yet I imagine we must look upon Hindostan as the place from which both have started, must assume that they were branches from the same root, and that their separation, however decided at last, was a slow and gradual work. Ultimately the systems did come into direct collision, and it became evident that they could not dwell together on the same soil. The Brahminical succeeded in expelling its rival from Hindostan, and it went forth to seek and to find an asylum first in one, then in another of those numerous Asiatic countries which it now claims as its own.

This view of the origin of Buddhism may be a great help, I think, in reconciling the very opposite reports of it which we obtain from those who have seen it in different, or even in the same, localities. The extreme Polytheism of India we found was not so incompatible with what was said of its original Monotheism, as it appeared at first. But what are we to say of a doctrine which is sometimes represented as one of almost perfect Theism; sometimes as direct Atheism; sometimes as having the closest analogy to what in a Greek philosopher,

or in a modern philosopher, would be called Pantheism; sometimes as the worship of human saints or heroes; sometimes as altogether symbolical; sometimes as full of the highest abstract speculation; sometimes as vulgar idolatry? Strange as it may seem, the same doctrine is, I believe, capable of assuming all these different phases; no one of them can be thoroughly understood without reference to the other. Each is very imperfectly denoted by the names which I have used; for the feelings, good and evil, which work in the hearts of human beings, can never be satisfactorily expressed by mere labels describing a notion or theory.

I. Thus, to begin with the first supposition. Buddhism is, as we have seen, an attempt at the highest, least material idea of divinity. Buddha is clear light, perfect wisdom. You must not try to conceive of him as doing anything. Rest is not so much his attribute as his very essence. He is One, the One; and it is only with the inward eye, purged from sensual corruptions, and steadily fixed on the contemplation of unity, that he can in any wise be apprehended. For the natural eye of the ordinary man views a multiplicity of things, each thing divided and separate from the other. The natural eye takes account only of appearances; it requires the severest discipline for a man to behold the Reality. This is surely Theism in its highest form and conception. It is something much more than we are wont to mean by that word, for by a Deist or Theist we often describe a person who does not deny the existence of God;

who admits it as a sort of ultimate fact, as the Hercules' pillar of the universe. But to the Buddhist, the belief in God is the most awful, and at the same time the most real of all thoughts; one not thrust back into the corner of a mind which is occupied by everything else, but which he thinks demands the highest and most refined exercise of all the faculty that he has. It is something which is to make a change in himself, which is at once to destroy him and to perfect him. And the effect is a practical one. Buddha is ever at rest. Can his worshipper be turbulent? Can he admit any rude or violent passions into his heart? He must cultivate gentleness, evenness, all serene and peaceful qualities, reverence and tenderness to all creatures, or he is not in his rightful state. He is not tempted, or obliged, as the Brahmin is, to look upon any human creature as merely animal, as excluded even from the highest privileges. He denies the natural difference of the Sudra; the poorest man of the vilest race may become one with Buddha. Hence, though he belongs to no priestly family, all his functions are more essentially those of a priest than the Brahmin's can be. He claims no civil distinction; he is to be reverenced simply as offering up prayers for the peace and prosperity of all other people. He must abstain from much speech. In silence he may best hope to know the Unseen Intelligence. This is one aspect of the doctrine, and surely a very interesting one.

II. But if the Buddhist sage asks himself,

"What is it that I am contemplating: I cannot see it, or hear it, or handle it; I dare not conceive it; it is altogether inconceivable, and yet I know of it only by this mind of mine:" he is likely to find himself in a strange perplexity. Or, if he puts the case thus to himself: "The end I propose to myself is to become absorbed, lost, that is to say, nothing. Can it be Something which is to work this result? Can it be Something I am contemplating?" He must say at length "No, it is Nothing. Nothing must be the ground of my life, of my being—of the being of all the things I see!" Here is Atheism; a deep, hopeless void, yet touching on the borders of that doctrine which implied real belief in a living Divinity.

The transition to such Atheism is, no doubt, possible in the Brahminical doctrine; but here it is much easier. For the existence of a continuous caste preserves the tradition of a Divinity, invests it with a reality in some sense independent of the mind of the beholder. Here all rests upon that mind. The light seems to be projected from the eye; now it may be a bright sun in the heaven; now it may shrink into a speck; now it may vanish altogether. Yet we should draw a wrong inference from the incapacity of the Buddhist in this state of mind to give any form to his belief, if we said that it is wanting. He may even declare in honesty, "I see nothing," and the words being the utterance of despair, not of triumph or satisfaction, may themselves contain a sure witness, even to himself, that there is that which no words

or thoughts of his can comprehend; an eternal absolute ground of all words and thoughts.

III. And soon the Buddhist discovers an escape from this void of nothingness. He began with looking upon the One Intelligence as alone real; all outward nature he discarded, as merely apparent. But the visible world claims its rights; he cannot disown it; he must, in some way or other, take it into his system. The Intelligence, therefore, the pure Buddha, must have a partner of his throne. It is Dharma; the principle of Matter; that out of which all things are formed. But these two powers, Intelligence and Matter, seem essentially opposite: if they are co-workers, how can they be reconciled? There must be another power, Sanga, the mediating influence, which binds the informing mind to the dead formless thing upon which it works. This is nearly the explanation which a Buddhist priest gave to the English resident at Nepaul of a subject which has occasioned much controversy. It is borne out by the symbols in the Buddhist temples. They seem contrived to express the idea of some active, productive power; of some passive, merely receptive power; again, of something which is the joint result of both. If we compare the Buddhist Triad with the Hindoo Triad of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, the Creator, Preserver, Destroyer, we are struck rather by their difference than their resemblance. The powers of preservation and destruction are militant powers; each is continually invading the kingdom of the other: Bramah is looked upon as the common

origin of both. Here the Intelligent Power is considered as balancing, or sustaining, the Passive, Material Power; and a third as necessary to their fellowship. The latter idea is, I think, by far the deeper, and more suggestive; but then it is abstract, rather than personal; more of a philosophical speculation; less of a practical belief. And it leads very directly to the next side of Buddhism—what is called its Pantheistic side.

IV. Beginning with the notion that the Intelligence is entirely separated from the world—that He is One, and it multiform—the Buddhist may arrive, by a series of easy steps, at a conclusion which would seem most opposed to this, that the Intelligence is essentially one with the world: in fact, that it can only be considered as the informing life or soul of the world. As in the case of Brahminism, it may be rightly said that this doctrine was latent in the Buddhist from the first: in other words, that the moment he began to think upon Nature with no other data than the belief which he possessed, he must inevitably terminate in this scheme. But it should be said at the same time, that he has struggled earnestly, even heroically, with this tendency; that his effort to contemplate the pure Essence indicates a genuine desire to see something above the world, not merely dwelling in it and actuating it. However true then it may be that Buddhism often becomes a mere notion of a God diffused through all things, I cannot believe that this is its characteristic principle. To ascertain what that is, we must examine

the next allegation respecting it, that it is especially the deification of human saints or heroes.

V. We can scarcely speak of this as a *phase* of Buddhism. Everywhere you will find certain human beings called Buddhas. You will find Europeans asking such questions as these, When was Buddha born? How many Buddhas are there? And those who are asked seem not astonished at the inconsistency of the two inquiries, or of either with that idea of a pure essential Intelligence, sometimes the fixed only reality, sometimes so divested of all qualities as to become nothing, sometimes diffused through all things. If you consider the starting point of the doctrine, you will see that the departure from it, which is involved in this notion of human Buddhas, is far less than it seems. The abstracted man was to become one with the Divinity. In the mind of the Hindoo a whole caste is marked out for that glory. But a whole caste evidently does not attain it; there must be immeasurable differences of taste, earnestness, wisdom, in the priests of one generation, still more in those of successive generations. So it comes to pass, that there is much feeling of a divine character diffused through a great many; not so much belief of actual divinity in particular individuals. Here, on the contrary, there is no check to the conviction that a man has risen to the state of Godhead—may be a God. In proportion as the Infinite Object fades into obscurity, or waxes fearful, the vision is more cherished of his appearance in some man, who in this or that period

confers blessings on some particular country; traverses different countries; now mounts into the regions where Indra the Lord of the Elements dwells—now descends to earth, like Vishnu; (for these powers have passed from the Hindoo into the Buddhist legends;) and leaves here and there, in some mountain or valley, footmarks which may be noted, and become the symbols of his continual presence. For as he has moved through space, passing rapidly from one portion of the globe to another, so does he live through different periods of time, the same principle inhabiting various forms; the same Buddha, though there may have been a number of Buddhas—though they may appear even now.

VI. And now we can understand how idolatry, the worship of different outward natural things, may be attributed to this Theistic, Atheistic, Pantheistic, Human Doctrine. Through all nature, above and beneath, Buddha has journeyed; everywhere he has left his footmarks; everywhere we may find tokens of him. Sun, moon, and stars, all things on this earth, may speak of him. Or we may think of him as the fixed Immoveable Past, as the Actual Present, as the dim Future of fears and hopes. But these sensible objects are too distant and vague; these Past, and Present, and Future, too abstract. And we want to feel that we are not contemplating them in themselves, or for their own sakes, but the living, quickening Intelligence which has stamped its form upon them. They must be changed into symbols; in that character we must approach them and revere them. They must assume shapes which

are given to them by the kindred Intelligence in ourselves.

Oftentimes these shapes will be animal; for how ought we to think of the creatures around us, with those half human faculties and affections which we discover in them; with the ferocity and cunning which are surely not peculiar to them? Must not they be inhabited by a human spirit in some degraded, fallen condition? Are they not wandering about as signs to us of what we may become; of that state to which, by cultivating the lower and baser qualities of our nature, we may reduce ourselves? So reasons the Buddhist; he reveres and fears the animals as meaner forms of that Intellect, of which he sees the highest form in the glorified man, the Buddha.

VII. I have not yet spoken of Buddhism as a social system. I described its ministers as forming an *order* of devotees, so distinguished from a *caste* of priests. It is necessary to speak thus of them, for we must not suppose because they have no hereditary vocation, that they take their office at hazard, or that they have no communion with each other. We have a very accurate description of the ceremonies which are observed in some countries at their consecration, of the questions which are asked to ascertain that they have no bodily or mental disqualification for the task. Such ceremonies, though they may vary in their forms, exist wherever Buddhism exists. In Thibet, which must be regarded as the centre and proper home of the religion, the priests are called Lamas; it is they who

decide who *the* Lama, the true high priest of the universe, at any given time is. I say they decide who he is; for they could never allow that the faculty of *choosing* the chief Lama resides in them. In some person or other the spirit of Buddha dwells; he is meant to be the head of the universe; to him all owe homage. This Lama, therefore, never dies; he is lost sight of in one form, re-appears in another. The body of some old man who has had this honour loses its breath, is laid in the tomb. The Lama has passed into some infant, who is brought up in a convent with special care, preserved from sensual influences, taught from the cradle to look upon himself as the shrine of the Divinity, and to receive the homage of rajahs, nations, even of the Celestial Empire; nay, even of European monarchs. Some of you may remember to have read of a solemn embassy sent by the English government at Calcutta, in the days of Warren Hastings, to the court of the Lama. A very affecting letter had been addressed by him to the English authorities in India, asking their help in checking quarrels between certain native sovereigns, an object, he said, which he sought diligently in prayers by day and night. An old man was the author of this letter; before Mr. Turner, the English envoy, arrived he had left the world; and a child of eighteen months was acknowledged as his successor. It reigned by no hereditary right; but the other Lamas presented him with unquestioning faith as the representative of the Perfect Intelligence through whom it would most surely utter itself.

If we now try to sum up the evidence which we have gathered from different indications respecting Buddhism, I do not know that we can do it better than in the words of Mr. Hodgson, the resident at Nepaul, to whom I have already referred. "The one infallible diagnostic of Buddhism," he says, with an emphasis and decision which were the result of patient inquiries, conducted during many years, "is a belief in the infinite capacity of the human intellect." This is the conclusion to which all our inquiries into the system have conducted us. The idea of an Adi Buddha, or Absolute Eternal Intelligence, is there, but it is hidden; it gradually evaporates. The possibility of utter Atheism is there; but the heart flies in dismay from it. The vision of a Unity resulting from the reconciliation of opposites is there; but it either passes into a mere theory, or seeks for images to express it, which make it material. The conception of an intelligent soul in nature is there; but it quickly resolves itself into a recognition of all Nature as symbolising human deeds and attributes. Lastly, the idea of deified men is there; but this loses itself in another, that there is in man, in humanity, a certain Divine Intelligence, which at different times, and in different places, manifests itself more or less completely, and which must have some one central manifestation. The Human Intellect is first felt to be the perfect organ of worship; finally its one object. This is Buddhism; this is the conviction which, with more or less of confusion, is working in the hearts of

three hundred millions of people on this globe of ours.

I greatly desire to ask this doctrine, what testimony it bears for or against that hypothesis which it is the purpose of these Lectures to examine; the hypothesis, I mean, that the Divine portion of the faith of different nations signifies nothing; that it is only an attempt to explain the phenomena of the universe; that there is no need of a Revelation to man, because in himself, in his own heart there is a sufficient revelation of all the truths he wants to know; that we may safely leave this to work itself out as it can in the different religious systems, without pretending to inculcate notions of our own, which, perhaps, are only a little better than those we should displace. But I believe we shall be in a fairer condition to meet these questions, when we have considered the circumstances of a country in which Buddhism does not exist alone; in which it is counteracted, and yet, I think, also illustrated, by the presence of systems older, in that country at least, than itself.

Numerous as are the puzzles which the history and actual condition of China may present to European inquirers—even to those few who are acquainted with its language, and have had opportunities of closely observing it—I do not think that there is much difference of opinion respecting its main and distinguishing characteristic. Its learned men, we are told by the most respectable authorities, say, without exception, 'a principle of *Order* is that which we discover and reverence in

the world:' and every act of their lives, the construction of their society, their art, their most minute ceremonies, bear out the assertion. If you hear their choicest phrases reported to you, or look at the works they have produced, or remember the duration of their empire, or think how many shocks from without it has withstood, or even read one of their singular state papers, you can scarcely avoid saying within yourself: here is a people which, successfully or unsuccessfully, is striving to be *orderly*, which for generations has been carrying on this struggle, which hates everything that interferes with its success, would gladly obtain it by any sacrifice. Hence the preservation of historical records in their driest form has been as important a purpose in their eyes as it has been an indifferent or impossible one to the Hindoo. Hence, from first to last, we discover among them precisely the opposite view of social life to that which we have noticed in the conception of the Buddhist Lama. The Chinese does not first ask where Spiritual Intelligence dwells, and then confess that to this he must submit. But he starts with the belief in Government or Society; and then demands that all study and intelligence should be applied to the preservation of it. The emperor is the datum or postulate from which the speculations of philosophers, as well as the arrangements of society, begin. He is put into the position which he holds that he may be the spring and soul of Order to the commonwealth. How he may be so

he is to inquire very diligently. All the functionaries of government are to be chosen according to their fitness to preserve that order, according to their knowledge of the maxims upon which it rests. To prevent any infractions of it by themselves, or those over whom they rule, is to be their incessant study. Instruction therefore, it would seem, has been from the earliest period a primary condition of all civil duties and employments. The Chinese have not anticipated the West more in other machinery than in that of education, and in the importance which they have attached to it. Schools, great and little, especially for the instruction of those who shall have any offices in the state, were the great distinction of those dynasties, which we should call in the history of any other people—here the name would be strikingly inapplicable—the heroic period of the Empire. Because they fell into decay, and the fabric of social order with them, it was necessary that a Reformer should appear.

Confucius appeared, not to introduce new maxims, but to revive the old—to explain what he saw to be the conditions and first principles of Chinese government and to embody them in books. These books have been for two thousand years the school-books of China: the maxims of society and practical conduct possessing an authority higher than any decrees, because they explain that which must make decrees stable, and procure obedience to them. The education of Confucius was one in state affairs. He was strictly a government functionary.

He was disgusted with the confusion and disorder which he found in all departments of the state, and he retired to meditate in secret the grounds upon which a reformation must be undertaken. He did not trust solely to his own reflection, or to Chinese antiquity. There was an old man, Laoutsee, who spoke much of the Divine Reason which dwelt within each man, of its being the first object of every man to cultivate this, and to bring all his faculties of body and mind under its rule. This he seems to have set up as the maxim of life, in opposition to the political notions of it, which prevailed among his countrymen generally. To his words Confucius listened respectfully; though far from admitting his doctrine, he turned it to account by subordinating it to his own. He taught also that a man must cultivate this reason in himself—must try to arrive at self-government, even at perfect self-government; but all for social ends and purposes, all that he might be better able to contribute towards the rational administration of the state, towards the preservation of public order. But where lay the root of this order? Its first ground Confucius, still professing only to be an interpreter of old and admitted doctrines, said, must lie in actual relationships; the family must sustain the state. The authority of the father must be the root of all other authority. The emperor must be regarded, must regard himself, as the common father. He was set to keep his people in order, and upon this principle he must order himself. These were not mere words. They

actually express that which has been the binding principle of Chinese society, from generation to generation. Jesuit missionaries, Protestant missionaries, English travellers, French philosophical admirers of Confucius, have all alike confessed it. The *maxims* of Confucius are faithful results of the observations of a man honestly desirous to make use of the experience that is given him for a moral purpose; they may generally be read with interest, often with admiration, as hints for conduct—even as helps to internal self-discipline. But they would be feeble and unmeaning, and could scarcely have exercised any great influence on the mind of a nation, if they had not rested upon the recognition of a real and eternal principle of order, lying far deeper than all Chinese formalities, or than the formalities in the mind of Confucius himself. Fatherly authority was his ultimate principle. Practically, he went not a step beyond it. What he heard of divine, unseen, mysterious powers above man, or above nature, or even in man and in nature, of some thing or person beyond the earthly emperor, or the earthly father—he by no means denied. Whatever faith his countrymen had respecting the invisible world, he would have wished to confirm. But he did not see his way in such inquiries: he could not trace the actual connection between them and practical life. And the sincerity of his mind revolted against the notion of merely using them as artifices, to keep up respect for human institutions. On this ground he has, I think, been too hastily

condemned as an atheistical philosopher. I cannot feel any desire to make good such a charge. It is a pleasanter, and also a truer course to admit that his confession of ignorance may have been a genuine one; and may even have implied that he had deeper thoughts than he knew how to express. We may be sure that what there was weak and maimed in his scheme will discover itself in the course of history, and that this discovery will be far more valuable than any rash conclusions of ours respecting it.

Not many centuries after this reform, a Chinese emperor became aware that there was some blank in the doctrine of Confucius; a blank which was not filled up by turning him into a god, and raising temples to him. Side by side with the Confucian, or State-worship, dwelt the Taou sect, the disciples of that old philosopher with whom Confucius had conversed, men who still maintained that the Reason was something divine and mysterious in each person, and would lead him into inward contemplation, not make him the handy instrument in a State machinery. But these people had little faith, except in themselves. The effect of their mysterious knowledge upon others seemed chiefly exhibited in charms and incantations and magic arts, which interfered with the good order of the State, rather than promoted it. Something else was wanted. The emperor heard of a great teacher and prophet somewhere in India. In spite of the remonstrances of wise men, who showed him how grievously he was departing from Chinese maxims in preferring

foreign to native culture, the Buddhist faith was imported into the empire. A religion resting upon communion with the unseen world, in all its outward and many of its inward characteristics the direct opposite of the Confucian system, gained footing on the soil which that system ruled. The result was what might have been expected. The new faith took hold of popular sympathy and has retained that sympathy to the present day. It was and is despised by the great mandarins, by the functionaries of government, by the adorers of social order. But it is more than tolerated by the government as such; it is recognised as deserving of respect, even of homage. Though the emperor cannot allow the Lama to interfere with his own supreme rule, and has procured the appointment of a deputy Lama who shall be really the head of the Buddhist society in his dominions, and his subject, he yet sends embassies to the high priest in Thibet, and asks his intercessions for China. Evidently Buddhism is felt, even by the disciples of Confucius, to be an element of society in China which cannot be dispensed with, and for which their own system, much as they may prefer it, offers no substitute.

I have said, that in *most* of its inward, as well as outward characteristics, the Buddhist and the Confucian doctrine are opposed. I used this language, because it is evident that in one respect they are not opposed. Different as are the functions which are assigned to the intellect of man in the three Chinese systems, that intellect is still an object of profound veneration to all. Wisdom is viewed

as wholly social and experimental in the first, internal and mystical in the second, strangely mixed with the idea of what is superhuman and eternal in the third. Had it been otherwise, had there been nothing common in these faiths, it is scarcely possible to conceive of them dwelling together in such an empire; or to suppose that one should at all supply the gaps in the other.

And which, then, of these three faiths shall we say can be described by that comprehensive formula, 'a mere attempt to explain the phenomena of the universe?' All three do attempt that, doubtless,—Buddhism, especially. But, does the faith of the Buddhist consist in this? Is it this which in his inmost heart he wants to know? Every inquiry we have made has led us to the opposite conclusion. He is obliged to question the universe, because he does not know what else he should question. He has questioned it, and to every problem which disturbs him it has returned a more confused answer. He has asked, what that is within him which is higher than it, what that is which seeks a knowledge which it cannot give? He is sure that he is above the world—that it was never meant to be his master—that the spirit in him must have its ground elsewhere. But where? What is this ground? Is it anything? Is it nothing? Who will tell him? That which has asked the question cannot give the answer. With deepest solicitude, he cries, "Do Thou, of whom I see the footmarks in natural things, but most of all in human beings, in those who have thoughts and reasons, and wills,

—in those who feel that these are not meant to be the servants of their senses or of the things with which their senses deal,—do Thou tell me who Thou art, and how I may draw nigh to Thee. Tell me what Thou hast to do with man, for something Thou must have. Tell me if there be a man, and where he is, in whom I may behold Thee; One who is not here to-day, and gone to-morrow; but who, amidst all changes of times, the disappearance of generations, lives on. Tell me if there be indeed a King and High Priest of the universe—a man actually Divine. And this, too, I need to know: What that Light is which dwells in me; whether it is self-derived, or, as my inward heart tells me, derived from Thee. Whether there be any Spirit coming forth from Thee to dwell in men, and bind them together—to make them gentle, and gracious and wise—to be the common life of all, and still the life of each. And if these things be so, tell me how these things can be reconciled, as my reason has whispered that they can be, though as yet I see not how, with that Unity—the essential condition of Thy Being—that which divides Thee from all the multitude of things and persons with whom in this world we converse." I say that Buddhism, rightly interpreted, is a prayer of this kind—an earnest prayer, consciously or unconsciously uttered by three hundred millions of people. And yet we are told that it is honouring the faith of these people, showing tenderness and respect for them to believe that there is not any Revelation, save that which man procures for himself. In other

words, that this prayer never has been, never can be, answered. Only if we have really brought ourselves to this contempt for the thoughts of so many human beings, can we patiently think of this faith working out, as the phrase is, its own results. It has been working out its results for all these thousands of years—and what have they been? The worship of the intellect has not caused the intellect to grow—not even to grow to an ordinary human or earthly stature; I say nothing of that Divine stature which it feels that it may reach. The priest of Buddha, of the Intelligence, is rarely an intelligent man. That mighty portion of the globe over which Buddhism rules is nearly the most ignorant portion of it. And yet in it lie the seeds of all highest, noblest culture, if only we can really address ourselves to that which is within the hearts of those who hold this faith, if we can only tell them that which they crave to know. That it is a vain and cruel thing merely to carry our own notions among them—our notions upon any subject, divine, human, earthly, I admit readily. If we do not know that which will solve their riddle—if we cannot tell them—Here is that which will turn doubt and confusion into clearness; here is that which is not our notion, but which has come from GOD to confound our notions, to confound our pride; and which is meant, not for us, but for mankind: for mercy's sake, let us be silent—the Buddhists are better as they are.

So also of the Confucian scheme. That cannot be charged with want of practical results. Yet

that something is wanting, China itself has confessed. Can it be supplied from within? When we fancy it I think we commit a great injustice. Mr. Medhurst, the author of an interesting book on China, the result of his own observations, expresses his wonder and even indignation, that Confucius, having dwelt so beautifully on the rights and duties of a father, should not have carried up his thoughts to the Great Father of all. I confess that I feel quite unable to adopt this language. It seems to me evidence of Confucius being a sincere man, that he did not allow himself to use mere figures of rhetoric upon this subject, for such in his lips they would have been. If having spoken of one holding an actual relation under the name of Father, he had afterwards used that word as a synonym for a Creator or for an unknown Being, the pleasure which such expressions might have caused us would have been dearly purchased by the loss of reality in the mind of him who resorted to them. If you can tell the Chinese that this is an actual relation, that it has been proved to be so, that our human relation is the image of it, that the reality of one gives reality to the other, that the honour paid to relationships is not incompatible with that seemingly abstract, unsocial, unreal view of the Reason of which the Taou sect has been the champion; and that the Buddhist spiritualism is not an element of new confusion, but of reconciliation—you will indeed discover to him that deepest foundation of order which he is looking for—you will show him that way from the visible to the

Invisible which he has never yet discovered. But any teaching short of this, that hard and formal and yet withal practical and serious mind of his, will repel. You will find that you have not learnt the spell which can break the heavy yoke of custom from off his neck, and change him from the most perfect of living machines into a living MAN.

## PART I.—LECTURE IV.

*The Old Persian Faith and its destruction. The Egyptian. The Greek. The Roman. The Gothic. General Conclusion.*

THE Mahometan, the Hindoo, and the Buddhist, are the great prevailing faiths of the world. A person indeed who should insist upon reducing all the religious thoughts and convictions he met with in different places under one of these three heads, would exhibit great practical ignorance; for the feelings and apprehensions which belong to actual human beings will not bear to be so treated. A man will not really be intelligible to you, if, instead of listening to him and sympathising with him, you determine to classify him. But it is true, that one who has patiently studied and livingly realised the characteristics of these wide-spread beliefs, will not be hopelessly puzzled by the notions of men in any part of the globe, civilised or savage. There are no other existing forms of religious thought sufficiently distinct from these to deserve a separate examination in such a course of Lectures as this; none which have not grown out of them, or have not been rapidly absorbed into them. And it is of existing systems that I wished first and chiefly to speak, because for the practical object I proposed to myself, and which Boyle desired we should keep in sight, these must

be the most important. I could not, however, do proper justice to the subject, if, before I enter upon the second division of it—the consideration of the way in which Christianity is related to different religions—I did not touch upon what may be called the defunct systems, those which belong to history, and which have yielded to the might either of the Crescent or the Cross. The word 'defunct,' we shall soon find, is only in one sense applicable to them; they had that in them which is not dead, and cannot die; that which is exerting an influence upon the mind and education of Christendom at the present day. Still, as systems, they belong to the past; they will therefore supply a new kind of test for trying the maxims respecting the worthlessness and transitoriness of what is merely theological, which I have been examining in former Lectures. For the reason I have given they ought not to be treated in the same detail as those which have occupied us hitherto: indeed, I do not think we should gain so much by considering them in detail, as by glancing at them side by side; so that the principles which distinguish them, and those wherein they are alike, may be more readily discerned. I shall therefore endeavour to compress what I have to say of them into a single Lecture.

I. The old Persian religion is the first which offers itself to our notice, as standing in a close relation, both outwardly and inwardly, to the Hindoo. The Zendavesta, the religious book in which this faith is professedly set forth, cannot be

appealed to as a very certain authority respecting it; what we possess is confessedly a compilation from earlier sources; and though critics think that they can detect older fragments in the midst of it, there is great difficulty in separating them from the mass, or in determining the time when it was put together. The age and history of the man who is spoken of as the great prophet of this faith, Zerdusht or Zoroaster, are equally obscure. It has even been questioned whether such a man ever existed—whether he does not merely represent a divine principle, or a stage in a nation's history. It might seem, then, as if this doctrine, of which we have such vague records, must have exercised but a slight influence; at all events, that its essential character cannot be ascertained. Both conclusions would be erroneous. Whatever authority the Zendavesta may have, whatever kind of person Zoroaster may have been, the Persian faith has been bound up with the life of a great portion of Asia, and has left as strong evidences as any both of its nature and of its power over the minds of men, even in generations far removed from each other.

The readers of Gibbon will remember a splendid passage of his history describing a great Asiatic revolution which took place in the third century after Christ. The old Persian empire was then ruled by the Parthians. Their dynasty had lasted for several centuries: it had been set up after the Greek armies had conquered Asia; after they had established their own habits and civilisation in the

midst of it. Their worship the Parthians to a considerable extent adopted; the old faith of the Persians they crushed. At the period I speak of it was found that this faith had lain hidden under the soil, but had never been destroyed. The Magi came forth and proclaimed that which they affirmed to be the original teaching of Zoroaster. The innovations of five centuries were swept away; a dynasty which the Persians recognised as the continuation of the old kingdom of Cyrus was established, and the nation's old belief was the foundation upon which it rested. This power became the great Eastern antagonist of Rome: at a later period it had nearly wrested the empire of Asia from Constantinople: it sunk at last under the irresistible strength of the Mahometan armies. For a time, those whom the Mahometans called fire-worshippers struggled hard: at length they vanished into an insignificant sect; Persia acknowledged the Prophet of Arabia as its one divine teacher.

But what was the faith which governed the old Persian while he ruled the world—which dwelt so deeply in the heart of a people that it could revive after a lapse of centuries—which perished all but utterly at last? We have seen that the Brahm of the Hindoo, the Buddha of that mighty sect which arose out of Hindooism, is especially the Intelligent Being, He in whom light dwells, and by communication with whom men become enlightened. Observe how naturally, how inevitably, one uses this word Light for Intelligence. We feel instinctively that

it is much the better word of the two; that one is hard and abstract, the other living and real. So men have felt in all countries and ages. Their bodily eye distinguished one thing from another—could exert itself in the day, was useless in darkness. They had as certainly something within them which could discern a sense in words, a meaning in things. This surely was an eye too. There was no better way of speaking about it: And there must be some light answering to this eye, older than it, otherwise it could not be. They discovered, too surely also, that there was a state in which this eye saw nothing, a state of darkness. If we keep these very simple thoughts in our minds, (I say, keep them in our minds, for they are there already; we are obliged to make use of this language—it belongs to us all, to prince and peasant alike); and if we recollect that what we are apt to overlook as too simple is oftentimes just the most important thing of all—the key which unlocks a multitude of treasure-houses—we shall be able to enter into the belief of different people, and to trace the transition from one to another far more easily. The conviction which we have found dwelling so strongly in the minds of Brahmin and Buddhist, though taking different forms, was this—"he who has the inward eye most opened, must be the greatest man: he in whom it is quenched, must be the lowest and most miserable man." And the puzzle which we saw tormenting them both, in different ways and different degrees, was this. But where *is* this light? Is it only in

the eye? What then does the eye behold? Is it *not* in the eye? How then can I call that a light? A very deep question indeed; the answers to which, in every case, are full of practical significance. The Persian solution was the most simple of all. He felt that his whole life was precisely this debate between light and darkness. There must, he said, be Lords over this light and over this darkness. This had probably been his oldest and strongest conviction.

The nights in Persia are clear and beautiful. The stars were a language which spoke to peasant and priest alike of light coming out of darkness. On these the one will have meditated till he thought them powers and rulers of the world; the other will have paid them actual homage. The Magians, the servants of the Light, will have devised a system of worship addressed to these. If Zerdusht or Zoroaster were a real man, he probably arose at a time when this worship had become very general, and when the mind of the people had become much debased by it. To some man, or some men, it was given to perceive that the ministers of light had become ministers of darkness. Those things which symbolised a Divine Light had been substituted for it. He rose up as the witness for Ormuzd, the Lord of Light, to testify that light comes from him, and not from the outward, material things; that whoso serves them is the servant of Ahriman, the Prince of Darkness. While Ahriman teaches his servants to bow down before visible things, Ormuzd communicates to men his

living Word, (that is the meaning of Zendavesta,) speaks to their hearts, teaches them the laws of justice and order. The battle between Ormuzd and Ahriman will be long, but Ormuzd must triumph at last. The kingdom of light is mightier than the kingdom of darkness. This was the substance of the Persian faith, to the revival of which, in its strength and simplicity, all that was vigorous in the Persian character and government seems to have been owing. There was the greatest difference between it and the Hindoo—precisely this difference. The Hindoo thought of light and darkness as the opposition between cultivation and ignorance—between the Brahmin and the Sudra; the Persian looked upon them as expressions for *right* and *wrong*. Far less refined and intellectual than the Indian, far less capable of mere speculation, he had a sense of practical, moral distinctions to which the other was almost a stranger, or, at least, which never presented themselves to him, nakedly and directly, as the foundation of all other distinctions. Hence a difference in their scheme of life. Right must be proclaimed by some one; not merely recognised or perceived. The Persian, therefore, looked much more to an authority which should command men, or to a teacher who should impart wisdom, than merely to a thinker or devotee. He regarded the king, from whom the law and words of grace proceeded, with more reverence than the priest. There might be many conflicts between the two, at times they might work in harmony, but this was the abiding, characteristic Persian feeling.

But there were two or three difficulties specially besetting him who held this faith. The Persian felt that visible things were not to be adored. It was the worship of Ahriman to set up them as the lords of men. Yet he had more need than the Hindoo to feel that the object he was worshipping was above himself, not merely *in* himself. He must speak of the Light as coming to him, not merely as proceeding from him. But if so, how shall he realise it? Must not the light, or must not the fire, or must not the sun, be in some sense or other an object for him to fear and obey? This thought would be always re-appearing in the popular mind, nay, in the mind of the teacher who most protested against it, when he was struggling with the tendency in himself and other men to set up their own thoughts as if the true Light was in them. To meet it the Magian devises a theory. These outward objects are but images or counterfeits of something within; they are the productions of the king of darkness: the good and great beings who appear in the world come forth from the inner kingdom to subvert these. Starting from such a notion as this, it was easy to produce a universe of phantasies; the simple and earnest mind of the Persian, struggling against them, and struggling in vain, would plunge into direct idolatry. Another awful question there was: Did this power of good originate the power of evil, or is each self-created? Or whence do they come? Some hidden being there must be—some deeper ground than all that man could conceive. They tried to express it in some

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name—they called this ground of all things, *Time without Bounds.*

Under this last form the Persian faith came into contact with the Christian Church of the first ages. The influence of the Gospel over Persia was slight and partial; but the preachers of it perceived a deep meaning in the Persian speculations. Gradually some appeared who thought the speculation beautiful, who cared little for the solution. These produced some of the darkest of the early heresies. When the Mussulman encountered the Persian faith he felt no such temptation. "Is this your GOD—this Time without bounds, this phantasy the Living Being? It is impossible. No! pretend what you will, you are worshippers of fire, or of the sun, or of the stars. With our swords we cut through your webs of sophistry—through your worlds seen and unseen—your good and your evil principles. There is one GOD, and Mahomet is his prophet. Yield to that belief, or perish!"

The victory was very complete; such an one is hardly recorded in the annals of the world. But when it was effected there was found to be something imperishable in Persian faith and feelings which could change the characteristics of Mahometanism itself. To it we owe those stories of fairies and genii, which mix with our earliest impressions of Mahometanism. In a later time Persia became the home of the great Sofi schism, which has introduced a new Pantheistic element into the doctrine of the Koran. Under the Mahometan teaching, which in Turkey has certainly been

favourable to veracity, the strong sense of moral right and wrong which distinguished the Old Persian has deserted him. He who was celebrated by Xenophon as above all men the speaker of truth, has become proverbial for lying.

II. The history of Persia at a certain period becomes connected with that of Egypt. The connection is a religious one. The Persian king, Cambyses, seems to have been a fanatic, and to have carried on wars, if not for the propagation of his own faith, at least, for the punishment of those who held what he thought a false one. The Egyptian priests were especial objects of his abhorrence. If we ask on what grounds, we shall be led into the consideration of another faith of the old world, which has left the most singular records of itself; which at different periods of its existence is bound up with Jewish and with Greek history; which was an object of profound interest to students two thousand years ago, and is scarcely of less interest to the students of our own century.

One subject immediately suggests itself to most of us when we think of Egypt. I mean its hieroglyphics, or sacred symbolical writing. And as the deciphering of this writing has been the key to all modern discoveries respecting the details of the history of this people, so the mere fact itself that they did use such a character, is, perhaps, the most helpful of all to the understanding of its principle. We have seen what a puzzle it was to the Persian to connect the outward things which he saw with those which were objects of his thought; how con-

tinually there seemed to be some light very near to his mind and heart which was revealing itself to him; how, while he realised this conviction, the outward sensible things which withdrew him from this light, were regarded as dark and evil; and yet how difficult he found it to express his thoughts about that inward light, except in terms which soon became confused with sensible images. The Egyptian never seems to have had this horror of visible things. He felt that something very sacred lay beneath them, and was expressed by them. To discover what this was, to read what was hidden in the objects of nature, was, in his apprehension, the function of the wise man. Then he was to translate back these perceptions of his into outward forms and images, that the vulgar might be able to profit by them so far as it was meant that they should. Hence, there grew up an order of priests in Egypt, as separate from the rest of society as the Brahmins. A caste system organised itself in the African, as in the Asiatic, nation. But the Egyptian priest was not an abstracted man in the same sense as the Hindoo; he did not so much withdraw himself from the contemplation of outward things, as seek to extract a virtue and a meaning from them. His first thought of all seems to have been that there was a Being hidden from man, but who was making himself manifest in different forms and signs. His operations in nature, the power which is exerted over the earth, and the life which goes on within it, might, especially in a country of such unparalleled fertility as Egypt,

present themselves as objects of wonder and witnesses of a Divine presence. But it would be impossible to think of these powers in the earth, without thinking of the animals which dwell upon it, of the different powers and qualities which they display, of their birth, and decay and renewal. These animals supply him with more distinct and definite symbols than the vague expanse of the heaven or earth. Different kinds of power are more concentrated and expressed in them; they can be far more easily exhibited in stone or in writing. Hence these became predominant objects of meditation to the priests. The various characteristics of the Godhead very soon become Gods. Students of Egyptian monuments discover three stages in the worship—three different cycles of gods. In the earliest cycle the idea of the Ammon, the hidden god, is the predominant one; and his manifestations are themselves rather in active energies, in vital operations, than in outward objects. The third cycle is the one most directly outward, hinting, however, at principles which in the first period were less perceived. As might be expected, different cities are found to have different classes of symbols; those in Upper Egypt to be characteristically diverse from those in the Lower; though at some period an attempt must have been made to bring all into one system.

Here, then, we seem to be in *the* idolatrous country—the country of divided worship: that which teaches us what idolatry means; how man loses sight of a centre: how every separate thing

about him may become his master. And yet, throughout the whole of this idolatry, there is a perpetual questioning of an unknown power to tell what this visible creation means. Each thing that is beheld is a riddle, an oppressive, tormenting riddle, of which some solution must be found. The Egyptian priest feels that the riddle is *in* the things. He does not put it into them, and it is not for him to do more than catch a stray hint of what each is denoting. But there is some object, some centre. The Pyramids point up to heaven as if they would say, "We are in search of it, we would reach it if we could."

Such a system as this, on whatever side he viewed it, would be very offensive to a Persian king, especially if he lived shortly after the revival of his own faith, and before it had undergone any of its later changes. The Egyptians would seem to him worshippers of those outward things, which he was taught to regard as in some sort the possessions of Ahriman. And all their mystical wisdom would look like miserable attempts to bring light out of darkness. It was far otherwise with the Greek. The inquiries and speculations of the Egyptian priests were listened to by him with attention and wonder. He thought they had a secret which he did not possess; he eagerly, but often in vain, questioned them to learn what it was. In later times, when a Greek kingdom had established itself in the heart of Egypt, under the Ptolemies, both Jews and Greeks met upon that soil, and the old Egyptian feeling, of a mysterious mean-

ing lying at the root of all things, exercised a remarkable influence over both. The influence was felt by the Christian Church which established itself afterwards there, and which consisted of both elements. It has left deep traces in the thoughts of men during all subsequent periods. But Christianity, which had a strong hold upon the Greek cities of Egypt, seems never to have penetrated into the heart of the country population. The symbolising tendencies which it had inherited from the old faith led to divisions on most momentous points, which appeared to lose their momentousness in the violent party strifes and intellectual subtleties to which they gave rise. Egypt became sectarian and demoralised; the Mahometan power established itself there. Various dynasties and various forms of Islamism have possessed it at different times; the arms which swept away subtleties and janglings were utterly unable to cultivate the mind of the Egyptian. All the European refinements and material wisdom of its present ruler have not awakened one thought in the people's heart, or done aught but make their slavery more ignominious and hateful. If the Memnon lyre is again to give forth any music, it must be touched by the rays from some sun which is not yet visible in that heaven.

III. To understand the difference between the Egyptian and the Greek faith, it is not necessary to study a great many volumes, or to visit different lands: our own British Museum will bring the contrast before us in all its strength. If we pass

from the hall of Egyptian antiquities into the room which contains the Elgin marbles, we feel at once that we are in another world. The oppression of huge animal forms, the perplexity of grotesque devices, has passed away. You are in the midst of human forms, each individually natural and graceful, linked together in harmonious groups; expressing perfect animal beauty, yet still more the dominion of human intelligence over the animal. You perceive that the Greek is not mainly occupied with spelling out a meaning in the forms of nature: their symmetry and harmony present themselves to him as delightful and satisfying. He is not trying to find out the natural characters in which he shall utter his thoughts: he feels that he is able to write them in a character devised by themselves, upon nature. He can take the forms of the world and mould them into expressions of the spirit that is working in himself. The Brahm or Buddha of the East, the God of Intelligence, is with him. At Delphi, the centre of the world, he utters his oracles of wisdom, by which states and men are to rule themselves. But he is no mere formal, abstract Divinity: He is all Light like the Persian God; you may see him in the sun; but he himself is a beautiful human being, with his quiver and bow, destroying the creatures that offend the earth, or punishing human wrongs; with the lyre, at the sound of which cities spring up and men are brought into order and harmony. Apollo seems to be the central figure in Greek mythology, that around which the others have disposed themselves. The idea of Light and

Wisdom, which is concentrated in him, is diffused in different forms, male and female, through the rest of the mythology, each having some particular locality, and presenting some different aspect to the Greek mind.

But it is felt that this bright, clear, human form cannot be the ground of all things. A Hindoo might have said that he was an emanation from the First Principle; but a Greek, with his strong human feelings, at once refers him to a Parent, and says that he must be the Son of Zeus, the Lord of All. And what is He, and where does He dwell? On a high Thessalian hill, out of the sight of men. There his thunders are heard; thence his decrees come forth. An awe surrounds his habitation, but he too very speedily becomes a clear, definite conception. He is seen in a human form, presently figured in sculpture. Human acts and passions are ascribed to him. The thought of mere solitary, self-subsisting grandeur is intolerable to the Greek; around him therefore must be a council of chiefs. And since the upper world seems his possession, since it is impossible to conceive of him otherwise than in the World of Light, the nether world, the dark world, must have its own ruler, and that other strange region, which seems neither to belong to the world above nor to the world below, the illimitable ocean, on which the Greek gazed with delight and child-like wonder, which was ready to swallow him up, and yet which owned his rule, which he could traverse with his ships, which gave him a sense of unbounded freedom and communion even

while it shut him in, and separated him from his fellows—this too must have its Monarch.

There was delight in forming these conceptions, in moulding them into actual shapes; and yet the heart craved for something else, something that it could not thus conceive and mould. Dreams came to them of an earlier period, when another divinity, older than Zeus, had dominion—Chronos, or Time, was his name. Of such a one Zoroaster had spoken, but his abstraction of time without limits is quickly moulded by the Greek into an outward form,—an old man with a scythe, who devours his children as soon as they are born. So quickly did these visions of a world above man, or of a world in the past, take their shape and colouring from the actual world, and from the mind of him who observed it. And other visions there were, which confessedly belonged to earth, though they began and ended with heaven. The Greek Hercules is the head of a whole class of human benefactors and heroes, who tilled and subdued the earth, drained marshes, destroyed beasts and oppressive men, one of whom also penetrated into the lower world, delivered the victims of death, so proving his title to be a son of the god, and, ultimately, rising into fellowship with the gods. With these were mingled men who aspired rashly and presumptuously to that glory—Titans, who strove to overcome the Lord of Heaven by pure strength—one who was sentenced to perpetual thirst for seizing the divine nectar—one whose name declares him to be the representative of wisdom and foresight, who opposed the brute

strength of the Titans, but who, because he stole fire from heaven for the good of man, must be fastened to a rock, and be the prey of a vulture, till a predestined deliverer should come.

All these conceptions could harmonise very well with that worship of Apollo which seems to have been characteristically the Greek worship. But at some time or other a mysterious divinity appeared, who possessed men with an inspiration which raised them into gods, or degraded them into brutes—a power to be felt rather than beheld. The Greek imagination was able to give even this Deity a form and a name; to invest him with ivy-leaves, and describe him as coming amid songs and shoutings from India. But the idea of such a power, so near to man, so deep and inward, could not forsake them. It uttered itself in poems, which were of a very different character from the free songs of early times; which spoke of man as carrying on a conflict with himself and with the world; which spoke of a deep, unknown Fate, whereto even the gods must bow. This faith associated itself also with Mysteries, which imparted to the mind of the whole nation a sense of something too sacred for words to utter, or images to represent, and which must, nevertheless, lie at the root of human life and society.

Meantime the feelings which these mysteries conveyed to the popular mind were realised in another way by thoughtful men; they began to say within themselves, The origin of the things we see, of our own lives, of human society, cannot be in those

persons to whom the traditions of our ancestors have ascribed them. The authors, they said, of these traditions were poets, who created our creators. But where is that which is not conceived, not created? Is it in the things themselves—in water, or earth, or air, or fire? Is it in our own mind? Is it in some principle which unites these together? These were the questions which the Greeks asked themselves, when they could be no longer content with the vision of a fair-haired Apollo, but must find out what that Light or Intelligence was of which his name testified. In pursuing such inquiries, some were willing to seek aid of those Egyptian priests who seemed to have discerned the meaning of things, and not to have invented a meaning for them. Some wished to turn the stories of their childhood into mere abstract speculations; some discarded them, and all belief together. The wisest of them laboured to show the Greek youths that their Conscience and Reason demanded something which they did not create for themselves; that all faith and reverence and worship, the words which they spoke, their own existence, their very doubts and questionings, pointed to a deep, eternal ground, which could not be a visible phantom, nor a theory, nor an abstraction—which must be *the* Being.

We may possibly persuade ourselves that with this record of human thoughts we have nothing to do. But with it is bound up the history of one of the most remarkable people that has ever existed upon the earth. Their inward history is necessary

to interpret the outward one. From it we must learn why the Greeks were so mighty, and why they were so weak; why their intellect asserted such a dominion over the greatest physical power, and why it could not be victorious over the animal nature in themselves; why, when they were feeble, they seemed capable of ruling the world, and why, when they became its masters, they were broken in pieces. And this inquiry has not become an obsolete one even in reference to Greece itself; the last thirty years have given it new interest. The Greek mythology, after some desperate efforts to ally itself with philosophy, and in that shape to put itself forth as an antagonist to Christianity, sunk into insignificance; the last school of purely Greek philosophy was closed in the reign of Justinian. But the habits and character which that mythology and philosophy embodied, exhibited themselves most remarkably in the history and controversies of the Christian church, were preserved at Constantinople through the whole of the middle ages, penetrated into the West at the revival of letters, have survived on their own soil three centuries of Mahometan dominion, and must be earnestly studied by all who desire that the new Greek kingdom should not exhibit all the vices and none of the merits of the old Greek republics; who desire that it should be, as it may be, an efficient bond between the European and the Asiatic, the Western and the Eastern world.

IV. The faith which is embodied in the acts and literature of the Romans is often supposed to

be the same with that of the Greeks. But this opinion arises, I think, from the habit of comparing the systems together, instead of seeking the main and central object in each. The majority of the Latin books which we read belong to a period after the Greeks had become the teachers of Rome, and after its own faith had in a great measure disappeared. Yet even from these, it is easy to perceive that Apollo, who, as the teacher of wisdom, the model of human beauty, the source of harmony, was the prominent Greek Divinity, never could have occupied any similar place in the Latin mind. In the *system* of the Greeks the father of Gods and men was of course the centre. He was so, I believe, practically and vitally to the Roman. But *he* did not habitually think of Jupiter as seated on a mountain, as the lord of earth and air. Such notions might gradually develop themselves in his mind; but, first of all, he believed there was One in the capitol of his own city; a presence there from which all law and government, the right of the father, the authority of the consul, proceeded. These different conceptions—of a Being dwelling in the centre of the world, and uttering oracles of wisdom to guide the thoughts and understandings of men—of one dwelling in the centre of the City, and issuing words of authority and law to bind citizens together, to restrain, mould, organise societies, seem to mark the difference between the characters and doings of the two nations; each wonderfully asserting the power of man over natural things, and ascribing this power to his con-

nection with a divine ruler, or teacher, or inspirer: but the one using nature to set forth man's thoughts, the other making it the servant of his purposes; the first creating statues, the other roads and aqueducts; both aiming at unity, but the one always ready to sacrifice actual unity to an ideal, the other considering everything subordinate to the object of keeping man practically at one; each alike disturbed by the oppositions of self-will and individual interest; but these concealing themselves, in the Greek, under the pretence of defending some Principle; in the Roman, under the ambition of upholding the rights of some Order.

This distinction is apparent in every part of the Roman faith. A God who defines and preserves boundaries is more sacred in his eyes than the teacher of the divinest art. If he honours any God as a teacher it is Mercury, because he imparts the gift of eloquence, by which bodies of men are swayed—by which armies are moved or regulated. This result, and not the cultivation of any faculty for its own sake, is what he seeks. The god of war, who is often utterly contemptible in the Greek legends, is his great patron and defender. The first king in old Roman heroic traditions is his son, though it is not as a conqueror, but as the organiser of an infant community, that those traditions present him to us. War, in the Roman conception of it, is not an exhibition of individual prowess, however such prowess may be called forth by it: but a means of subduing restless, striving atoms into order. It is, then, not at all inconsistent with his

reverence for Mars, that a feeling of the sanctity of domestic ties should especially belong to his faith. Virgil, who, though as a writer he may have copied Greek models, was in heart a Roman, and entered into the spirit of his country's traditions better than any man, lays the foundation of it in filial reverence, in the care of household gods. If the Roman entertained any of the Persian awe of fire, as the symbol of light and penetrating power, it was expressed in his worship of Vesta, the goddess of the hearth, the preserver of family purity, and in the fire which was ever to be kept burning within her temple. The power of the father lay at the root of his law and life; and it was not, like the Chinese, a mere human apprehension, it was practically and essentially connected with all his thoughts of a Divine Being. He looked upon the bonds of family life as implied in the existence of a commonwealth—as its necessary basis and continual support. Upon any less real foundation so mighty a power could not have stood. Having such a ground, whatever threatened it with dissolution ultimately contributed to its strength. Conflicts of different orders of society brought out principles of the constitution which were previously latent; opposing principles, yet necessary to each other. And soon it seemed as if a power which had grown up by such regular and mysterious processes must be irresistible. Carthage, Egypt, Greece, bowed before it. The Parthian Empire disputed with it the sovereignty of Asia. The countries of Western Europe it appeared specially appointed to subdue

and civilise. The belief of Rome gave it, as we have seen, its centre: in the capitol where Jove dwelt, the nation and the world which it ruled found the principle of their cohesion. The statesmen saw that it was so; they lost the belief, but determined that it must be upheld for the state's sake. The Family they would have acknowledged it was expedient to uphold for the same reason; but that refused to stand upon a fiction, to live merely because it was wanted by the politician. As all domestic bonds became relaxed, the forms of the religion became more consciously unreal. Then it was seen that the state could not exist any longer upon its old ground. A visible Emperor must supply the place of an invisible Law and Presence. The military sacrament of the soldiers to the commander must be the one substitute for the ancient reverence. And such was the force of this bond, so much of the feeling and principle of order still survived in it, that the state could last even for centuries with this thin plank separating it from the abyss. The plank cracked often—gave way at last; and the nations, which had been prepared for the day and the hour, seized the spoil. Before that catastrophe the proclamation of a set of Galilean fishermen, that a crucified man was the Lord of the World, had been believed by the Emperors. Roman paganism seemed to disappear from the earth. But its peculiar character, the secret of its power, the cause of its decay, should be carefully reflected on, or the History of Western Christendom for twelve hundred years will be to us an inexplicable riddle.

V. Very soon after Rome became an empire it was discovered that there was a part of Europe which was more formidable to it than even the Parthian empire in the East. Intelligent Romans began to inquire very earnestly what that German race was which seemed to present the newest and strangest obstacle to Roman ascendancy. They had a prophetic feeling that the question would be a very interesting one in after days to their own country and to mankind. They found a people who recalled to them the traditions of their own ancestors; rude and scattered, full of individual energy, severe and chaste, reverencing family bonds; with a sense, however imperfectly developed, of social order. A few observations they made upon the faith of this people, which are well worthy of note. "The Germans looked upon day," says Tacitus, "as coming out of night, the last as the ground of the first. They appeared to pay a kind of worship to the earth. They looked upon themselves as descended from Mannus." It seemed to the Roman, trying to translate their notions into his own, that Mercury was their chief god. These hints, slight and imperfect as they are, throw great light upon the mythology of Germany and the North, as we receive it from those who lived under its influence. To trace it through all its mazes may be difficult, and not very profitable; but there are certain great features in it which are worthy of earnest consideration.

I did not endeavour to disconnect the Mythology of Persia from its climate and scenery. The

thoughts of the Magian were wonderfully affected by Eastern nights and days, and Eastern earth and sky. So likewise were the thoughts of the Goth, by the murky atmosphere in which he dwelt, by the dark woods which he must fell, by the seas out of which the solid land emerged or which broke in upon it. Doubtless, the phenomena of the world occasioned the Northerns great perplexity; all the powers of earth and air and fire and water are at work in their tales and poems. The conflicts of these powers, may, in one sense, be said to be the subject of them.

But we know little, indeed, about our ancestors, if we suppose that they were thinking merely about such matters. They described wars of giants, of good and evil powers. It is easy to say these giants only express the struggles and throes of nature—cultivation contending with barrenness, spring succeeding winter. But why are they giants? Why do they take this personal form? Why, if winter and spring were chiefly in their minds, did they not speak of winter and spring? Tacitus is most right in saying that the earth is the object of their study, perhaps of their worship; but he is still more right in saying that they felt themselves derived from Mannus. Man is the subduer of the earth; because he lives upon it, tills it, sows it, rescues it from the waters, brings the harvests of autumn out of the frosts of winter; therefore do these Goths care about the earth. And those battles which they see going on upon it or beneath it, those struggles of gigantic powers of evil with deliverers

and benefactors, are interpreted to them by what they feel going on in themselves; they are the wars of Mannus, much more than of the earth, and sea, and sky. Read them in this light, and every Northern saga is full of profoundest interest and instruction. A mighty power of death and of darkness struggling to draw all creatures into itself; mightier powers of good struggling against it: consuming fires, that are to destroy what is corrupt; life coming out of death, second birth, resurrection —these are ideas by which you see that they were haunted and possessed. They could find no clue to the strange mystery, yet they felt that it was near them, and about them, and that there must be some bright sun, which would come forth one day to scatter the shadows, and show all things in their true relations and proportions. Yet it is equally true that Mannus himself and his origin are lost in the Infinite. Tacitus expresses the idea of the mythology in this respect too distinctly and definitely, but not unhappily, when he speaks of Mercury the messenger of gods and men, who passes rapidly from heaven to earth, and from earth to the shades below, who connects each with the other, as the object of Gothic reverence. Such a being, only surrounded with vagueness and mist, not capable of being exhibited in a form like the Greek Hermes, or the Roman Mercury, is the Northern Odin. Each new theorist about him will present him in a different aspect, one as a mere mortal, to whom a history may be ascribed—one as a mere Divinity—one as a teacher of human wisdom—one

as merely the ideal of wisdom—one perhaps as the representation of some physical process—one as the establisher of a political order. Each may give plausible reasons for his opinion; no worshipper of him could have told you which was true; he would have felt that in some sense all must be true. Precisely the necessity of his mind was to find some object in which these characters might really meet: who should bring the clear light out of the darkness, and be a conqueror in that war with the earth's tormentors.

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I have now completed this division of my subject, and I may ask you for a moment to consider how the different portions of it are connected together, and what is the general result. Mahometanism, we see, stands upon a different ground from all the rest. It starts from the Divine Will, it assumes a declaration of that Will to men, it affirms men to be the servants of God to execute His Will. Hindooism has only the faintest conception of a Divine Will; but it recognises a Divine original Light or Intelligence from which the intelligence in man proceeds, and which it is to contemplate. In striving to ascertain what this Light is—how it is distinct from the human intelligence—the Brahmin becomes lost in speculation. The Buddhist cuts the knot, practically makes man's intellect the origin of all things; yet recognises a certain universal Intelligence dwelling in the race, and concentrated from time to time in some person. Hindooism and

Buddhism have been compelled in different ways to come down from the merely abstract region, and to speak of the Divinity as concerned with the doings of ordinary men; as exercising influences beneficent or pernicious over them: each has been obliged to explain what the universe has to do with the original Intelligence; each has been compelled into an idolatry of material things against which, in its first conception, it is a protest. Both have struggled with Mahometanism, and been overcome by it; neither has been able to amalgamate with it; for neither has it been found to be a substitute. Buddhism in China has established itself side by side with a system of social order, the basis of which is the recognition of paternal authority, and which regards the knowledge of the invisible as unattainable. Entirely opposed to this system, Buddhism has been found nevertheless an indispensable supplement to it: even for the accomplishment of its own purpose. These different faiths, which exercise a dominion over so large a portion of the universe, claim something to satisfy them, something to unite them. Not one of them contains the solution of the difficulties which it has raised; each testifies that there is a chasm which the other seems meant to fill up; but it remains a chasm still. Not one of them can be satisfied by any philosophical theory about the universe, or about man, or about God, or about all of them. Mahometanism meets such theories by its primary proclamation, God is; He must be a living personal Being: he must be the King of Men. Hindooism is continually at-

tempting to philosophise, but every new turn of its history proclaims, We want a Living Intelligence, which shall hold converse *with* men, and with which men may converse. Buddhism has been a continual effort at philosophy; but every passage of its history proclaims, Philosophy will not do for us; we want a Living Intelligence to dwell *in* man. And now we have to add some new evidence to this. First, we hear from the Persian a cry for some infinite, absolute Being, the ground of Light and Darkness, which he can only call Illimitable Time. Then from the Egyptian the witness of an Ammon, or hidden God. Then from the Greek the cry for something which he cannot express—which must be veiled in mysteries, which the poet speaks of as irresistible Fate, which the philosopher says must be the Being, which cannot be material, and yet is no abstraction. The Roman must have an invisible God of the city, a righteous lawgiver, preserving the authority of his state, or it perishes. Unless in the heaven or the abyss there be one greater than Mannus, the dark thoughts of the Goth signify nothing. But none of them can be satisfied with the recognition of this hidden Being. There must be a manifestation of Him. From the immeasurable Time a Light must come forth, and that Light must be a Person. An Ormuzd must speak living words, nay must be a living Word. Ammon must assume forms; the visible must, in some way, set forth the Invisible. One all clear and bright must be himself Wisdom to the Greeks —must utter the thoughts of Wisdom, which keep

them a people, and then must scatter himself through a thousand visible images. The Jove of the capitol cannot be only there. His presence must come forth in the host and in the family. Odin must travel from land to land, teach, give laws, open Walhalla to men.

Look at these religions, and you see in them all a witness of unity. Look at them again, and you see there is something which divides them from each other. They confess that if men are to unite, it must be in something above themselves; they cannot unite; for things beneath themselves, the accidents of life, the climate, the soil of the lands in which they dwell, seem to determine what it is that is above them. They confess that if men are to unite, it must be in something above themselves; but the habits, tempers, tastes of the worshippers determine what it is which is above them.

This is the report which history gives of these religions—the stamp which they have left of themselves upon the actual universe. Dare you talk of all this as merely an illustration of the working of the religious principle in men? Dare you use such a dry, withered, heartless abstraction, to get rid of the recollection that you have been hearing how beings of your own flesh felt and acted and suffered? Or can you comfort yourselves with saying, "These have all passed away; the Persian Ormuzd and Ahriman—the Egyptian dream of types in the world which must have some antitype—the Greek question, how is it I can create such marvels? what is it I cannot create?—the Roman sense of

a divine order in the nation and family—the Odin warfare of good and evil spirits; they have passed away as visions of the night." Visions they were, but visions which came to men concerning the dreadful realities of their own existence. They were visions of the night, but by them men had to steer their vessels and shape their course; without them all would have been dark. And we belong to the same race with the men who had these visions; some nearer to us, some more distant, some brought up in regions utterly unlike our own, some almost our kinsmen after the flesh; all our kinsmen in reality. It has not been a mistake, I believe, in our education that we have busied ourselves so much with the legends of Greece and Rome. If we used them aright, they would not serve for the food of an idle dilettantism—they would teach us reverence and fear. We should tremble as we remembered, 'These dreams of a beauty which eye hath not seen, or ear heard, have visited the hearts of human beings generations ago; the dark and filthy imaginations which mingled with these dreams were engendered in the same hearts: by one as much as the other and by the fearful combination we know that those hearts were like our own. They will dwell together in us, and in time the vile will seem real, the beautiful only a shadow, unless we can find that the beauty has been somewhere substantiated; unless we can see the beauty apart from the corruption: unless there is some power which can establish the one and destroy the other in ourselves.'

Such reflections often come, I trust, to the young

men of our land, as they read the classical fables. Yet these belong rather to a refined cultivation, and they may so possess the mind with the love of finite forms as to make it forget that those who conceived them could not be satisfied with them; but cried for the Infinite beyond. It is otherwise with the tales of our own proper ancestors. These are bound up with the thoughts of our peasantry; the most ignorant man feels that they represent some of the unspeakable fears and hopes of his spirit. And they clothe themselves in no graceful forms. The storms and earthquakes of nature are the only adequate types of the conflict which they speak of, a conflict in which human beings of that day were actually engaged. Are we not engaged in it too? Have we asked ourselves whether we can bear up in it alone? if not, whether we know where help in it is to be found?

# PART II.

# RELATIONS OF THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD WITH CHRISTIANITY.

## LECTURE I.

*Why Judaism has not occupied a separate place in these Lectures. Mahometanism related to Christianity on its Judaical side. Nature of the relation indicated. Wherein Mahometanism differs from Judaism. Dangers to Christianity from the forgetfulness or predominance of its Mahometan side. How the Christian Faith and Church satisfy the cravings of Mahometans.*

I SPOKE in my last Lecture of Mahometanism, Hindooism, and Buddhism, as the three great existing religions of the world; of the Persian, the Egyptian, the Greek, the Roman, and the Gothic, as the most conspicuous of those which belong to the past. It may strike some of you, that in one of these lists, though you may scarcely be able to say in which, there was a capital omission. Might not even the letter of Boyle's Will have reminded me, that the Christian missionary is likely to be encountered by Jews in all parts of the world? Is there any faith which has had a more memorable past than theirs?

It is indeed true, that a person must take a most

imperfect view of society during the last eighteen hundred years, who forgets that the Jew has had a place in it. Upon whatever age, upon whatever portion of the world he fixes his eye, this strange figure encounters him. He sees men without a place which they can call their own upon the earth, still feeling themselves to be *the* nation which has been chosen out of all others to be the head of the earth; men willingly submitting to the most grovelling occupations, and with a character seemingly conformed to these occupations, yet never deserted by a vision of past and future glory; men trampled upon by all people, and yet exercising a mighty influence, one which has increased with the increase of riches and civilisation, over the counsels of statesmen and princes; men, who if the time should come when no GOD but Mammon is worshipped in the world, will carry a fearful recollection into the temples of Mammon of one who may be his destroyer. It is true also that the Jew has never been without powerful arguments for that which he holds, and against that which he denies. He can always appeal to his own consistency in support of the first —to the persecutions and crimes of Pagans, Mahometans, and Christians, as evidence in opposition to *them*. Though he cannot make converts, though he does not wish it—for his business is to keep the family of Abraham distinct from all others—he can do much to shake the faith of those among whom he dwells. In all times, of late years more especially, he has been able to adapt himself to prevailing habits of thought and feeling, to become

conspicuous in art and science, to enter into philosophical speculations, and strangely to mingle the lessons which he has received in the schools of the Prophets with the wisdom of those who most despise them.

The Jew then may on these grounds be well said to belong to the present, his religion to be one of the existing religions of the earth. He is a witness for something which survives. But he is also, by his own sad confession, a witness for something which is departed. Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, exhibit the signs of a bygone world to travellers who go in search of them. The Israelite carries the signs of the change which has befallen Palestine with him into the meanest street of every city of Europe, Asia, America. The rich merchant, the beggarly hawker testify to the glory of David and Solomon.

But there is this reason for not placing the Jew in either of those divisions to which I referred the other beliefs of mankind. We cannot go back in his case, as we did in the Mahometan, to the first promulgation of the faith, or, in the case of the Hindoo, to the earliest Vedas, without finding ourselves engaged in the assertion or defence of that which is as dear to us as it is to him; we cannot interpret his present position, except by comparing it with our own. In following the course which I marked out for myself originally, we shall, I believe, be enabled to consider this subject from its right point of view. I proposed to inquire how the religions which have passed under our review stand

severally related to Christianity. The first of these was the Mahometan. Now it is in the Jewish side of Christianity that we must seek for this relation. From the Old Testament we shall learn what are the great points of agreement between us and the Mahometan. In studying those points of agreement, we shall, perhaps, see more clearly the grounds of our difference both with the Mahometan and the modern Jew.

I. I endeavoured to show you in my first Lecture that the mere dry, formal assertion of the unity of God, as an article of doctrine, was not that which had given Islamism its power. The proclamation, "There is one God," was no school formula; it was the announcement of a Living Being, acting, speaking, ruling. Now this is the leading characteristic of the Old Testament. Schoolmen giving you an account of it will say, that it is distinguished from all Pagan books by its assertion of the unity of the object of worship. But we have seen reason to think that this quality, taken alone, might not separate it from the early sacred writings of the Hindoos. Turn to the Book of Genesis or Exodus, and you at once feel the essential difference. There are no speculations about God, no questionings how man is to contemplate Him, or to be absorbed into His essence. He is creating the world according to a certain order; He is making man in His own image; He is placing man in a garden, fixing a certain prohibition for him, giving him a helpmeet, discovering his sin when he has broken the command, pronouncing a sentence upon him, promising

him a blessing. He is punishing the murderer, visiting the earth with a flood, calling out a man to be a preserver of the race, sending forth his sons to people the earth, with the rainbow as a pledge of His mercy; scattering them abroad when they wish to build a tower, and to make themselves a name; calling a man out of his father's house, and bidding him go into a land which should be shown him; promising him that in him and in his seed all the families of the earth should be blest; giving him a covenant, giving him a son; trying the faith of the father; revealing himself to Isaac and Jacob; guiding the Hebrew youth into Egypt; causing him to bring his whole family thither; hearing their cry when a king arose who knew not Joseph, and made them slaves; revealing Himself to Moses as the I Am; sending signs and judgments upon Pharaoh, bringing the people out of Egypt, appointing them a feast in memorial of their deliverance from generation to generation; feeding them with manna, and causing the rock to be struck when they were thirsty; proclaiming the Law to them amidst thunders and lightnings; prescribing the form of the tabernacle, and the order of the priesthood; laying down the ordinary rules which were suitable to them as an eastern people; going before them in the ark of the covenant.

Nothing, you see, is set forth in the Hindoo manner, as a dream, or thought, or reflection *about* God; all is set forth as coming *from* Him; He *is*, and He is doing. This is the Old Testament language; this is the language which the Maho-

metan asserts must be true still. It is a record, he said, but not merely a record—it tells us of Him who was, and is, and is to come; of One by whose command the world was made, and by whose command it subsists; who rules and directs in the affairs of men, not less now than of old. I conceive that there is nothing in Christianity so primary and fundamental as this belief; nothing which it is so necessary for us to assert, in the simple practical language of the Old Testament, and not to dilute by any modern phrases or unreal substitutes. It was on this account especially that I violated chronology, by considering Mahometanism before either of the other religions with which it divides Asia; for I believed that it had taken hold of the great first principle—that it had begun at the beginning; not working its way up to the divine ground from the earthly, but assuming that ground as its starting point. And, at the same time, I wished you to feel how idle the assertion is, that this doctrine merely belongs to the world in its infancy; how when it seemed to have become obsolete, amidst the arguments and discussions of the schools, it stood forth again as a living, terrific reality: as a truth which men must be taught by the sword, if they would be taught it in no other way.

II. Next, the Mahometan believed that the Lord of All does actually make His will known to men; that He speaks, and that they can hear and obey His voice. This is the second most obvious characteristic of the Old Testament. Abram is called out of his land by the unseen Lord. He knows that he

is, and he does what he is commanded. Moses is bidden to go in before Pharaoh; he shrinks from the work, but he is certain that the Lord God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob has sent him. Thus Revelation, or the declaration of God's mind and will—of God himself—to man, is assumed as the ground of action, and history, and knowledge. It is not put as a vague, distant possibility that such communications *may* be made to man, that they may reach him; it is declared that they must reach him, or that he is helpless and ignorant. He must act under a divine call of some kind, or he cannot act rightly. The Mahometan affirms that this truth of the old time is a truth of the later time. In the seventh century after Christ, Mahomet claims to be called of God to a work. We may believe that in many points he greatly mistook the nature of this call, of this work. But the principle that any man who rouses the heart of a nation, who proclaims any deep truth in the midst of it, has a calling—a calling from God—that he has no right to deny it or to explain it away; that he cannot do what he is meant to do except on the faith of it; this is a conviction which we Christians, like the Mahometan, have inherited, or ought to have inherited, from the Jew. Our own language is framed upon the supposition: we speak of callings and vocations. If the words mean nothing, it is a great pity that we should use them. It is lending ourselves to a falsehood—it is contracting a false habit of mind. But I am sure they have meant something to men in past times—to all good and great

men, who have really served their generation in any kind of work. And I do trust and believe that they mean something to some of us still; that we feel we should be parting with what is most precious, if they ceased to mean that something—that we desire they should mean much more.

III. But, thirdly, the Mahometan, while he acknowledges that the voice of God thus speaks to men, believes as strongly that there is meant to be some record of His utterances—some book of which it may be said, This is *the* book. He cannot part with this conviction; it is necessary to him. Whether or not he can explain how and why the Koran should cease at a certain point, he is sure that it was to cease at a certain point—that there must be a Book which is complete, and to which men may refer as an authority. The Israelites, of whom we read in the Old Testament could not of course contemplate that Book as a complete Book; it was growing. Their own lives and histories were contributing to it. Their Patriarchs had no Book. Still, from the time that the Law was delivered, they were convinced that they had that written in enduring letters which proceeded from God. They believed that His communications were meant to be preserved in letters. They laboured to preserve them, and to keep them apart from all which they believed was not His. They had confidence that God Himself would watch over His own Revelation. Upon us this conviction also has descended; we agree with the Mahometan that the belief in a Book of Revelation, a completed Book, is not

incompatible with the idea of God ruling in the world *now*—of His calling men to do a work for Him now: nay, that the one truth is necessary to the other. Why Mahomet required a new Bible in the seventh century, why we do not require it, is a point to be considered hereafter; that which I am pressing here is, that both alike do feel the need of a Bible—of a Divine Book.

IV. But the Mahometan does not only look upon the peculiar Prophet as called of God. He believes that the whole body of Islamites is a body called by God to the work of proclaiming Him, and putting down whatever sets itself in opposition to Him. I need not remind you that the children of Israel had this belief before them. In the strength of it they went—a little handful of men, who were lately Egyptian slaves—and drove out the Canaanitish people; beating down their walls, and slaying them with the edge of the sword. They were not a wild, undisciplined host—a terrific horde, like the Huns or the Avars of later times; they were most orderly; divided according to tribes, each man encamping beside the standard of the house of his fathers, marshalled under regular leaders, practising the ordinary methods and stratagems of war. Still, that which gave them all their energy, that which made them one people, that which caused their discipline to be an instrument of their valour, not a substitute for it, was a belief that the Lord of Hosts was among them, that they were His soldiers, and moving under His command. They were sure that they had a commission from Him to punish a people

the cup of whose iniquities was full. They were sure they were not doing a work for themselves, but were executing the purposes of His Will. And this the Mahometan says is the true law of armies, the right spirit for men of later as well as earlier days to fight in and to act in. They must feel that an Unseen Power is in the midst of their host; that they are His soldiers. We are often told that the opinion is a mistaken and a dangerous one; one which belonged to Judaism, and which Christianity discountenances. I cannot think so. That there is a sense in which the disciples of the Koran have perverted Jewish example, I shall endeavour to show presently. Perhaps we shall find that the perversion has been in not adhering to it closely enough. But I do not think that any Christian nation has ever been the worse for believing that it was acting as the minister of God. Our forms and proclamations always express this. Have we been better when these forms and proclamations were real and significant, or when they were false? It seems to me, that the more we come to think these phrases not merely phrases, but the expressions of what is true, the more simple and honest our lives will be, and that when to any nation they become mere phrases, its life, I need not say its Christianity, is gone. I feel very sure that the sense of a Divine Presence has never utterly forsaken, and does not forsake any host of Christian men fighting by land or sea: or that, if it do, their arms become palsied, and they become the shame of their enemies. They may act very inconsistently with this profession;

the inconsistency no doubt weakens the reality of it; but it is not a mere profession. Asking the help of God may be a poor formality to easy, luxurious men; those who are on the eve of battle, who are standing between life and death, have no time for words unless they mean something. And they have a signification as of old, otherwise a feeble force would not be able to put a greater one to flight, supported by all the advantages of position, and the resources of art. When our soldiers shall quite disbelieve that the same Lord who went forth with Joshua and Gideon is with them, see whether we shall have tidings of courage and triumph, and not rather of cowardice and ignominy.

V. We saw how much the office of the caliph or sovereign blended itself with Mahometan life and history, how the visible centre of the host recalled to each soldier the sense of his allegiance to Allah the Unseen King. Here, again, we are reminded of the Old Testament. David, and every true king, felt that he reigned by covenant with God, that he was the witness of Him to the people. And his people returned the feeling. Looking up to him, they felt that they were a people indeed—it was not a dream; they were so actually; they had one heart, one with each other, one with those who had gone before them, one with those who should come after them. Of course such language is liable to misinterpretation. There were crimes and divisions in the times of David and Hezekiah, as at all times. Scripture does not conceal them, but declares them, and shows the punishment of them.

When any evil deed was perpetrated by the king it destroyed the reverence of the people for him, and so their own unity. On the other hand, their evil condition re-acted upon him, and led him to depend more on the number of his armed men than upon the strength of Israel. These facts, far from weakening the assertion I made, illustrate it. Do not they seem also to prove that these records are not merely records of the past, or of a particular nation, but that they explain the bonds by which sovereign and subjects are connected according to a divine and immutable law, in all times and in all nations? So the Mahometan thought in his own case. Had the people whom he attacked felt the same; had there been that real vital relation between the monarch and those who paid him homage, which there was between the caliph and the soldiers of the Crescent, those soldiers would not have triumphed as they did. I am making no rash assertion; but one borne out by history. Asia was not able to resist the armies of the prophet, because there was in it no such national feeling as that which I have described. Constantinople could not ultimately resist them, for this feeling was perishing in the Greek empire. They were resisted in Western Europe, for there a set of Christian nations had gradually grown up, believing, amidst many confusions and inconsistencies no doubt, but still practically believing, that their kings were covenant kings, reigning in the name of the Lord, as much as the kings of Judah had ever done.

These are some of the points of real affinity between

Christianity and Mahometanism. I say *Christianity;* meaning thereby that though these principles belong to the Old Testament, and not to the New, as such, yet that Christians can adopt them and realise them, and that Jews, who seem to stand upon the ground of the Old Testament, cannot. I do not say this in reproach to them, I merely state a fact. All the most living principles of the Old Testament, those which were embodied in the history of the Jewish people, have become dead letters to their descendants. They retain the acknowledgment of the Divine unity as against anything which contradicts it, or seems to them to contradict it. But the sense of a Living Being, of One speaking, acting, ruling, this may dwell deep down in the heart of Jews; it may have been drawn out by persecution in many; but, so far as we can judge, it is always threatening to become dried in a formula among the orthodox Israelites, to lose itself in pantheistical phrases among the liberal and intellectual. The former class will readily acknowledge a Divine Book, but for the very purpose of keeping out the notion of any real intercourse between heaven and earth since it was closed. And yet this Book will not satisfy them; it must be stifled under Rabbinical interpretations; all its practical, homely, awful realities, must be reduced into notions, and speculations, and frivolities. The liberal class will gladly avail themselves of phrases about a living voice, that they may throw off the burden of these interpretations, and in fact of the Book which they oppress. But the living voice does not

proceed from a personal being who has a right to command his creatures; there is no bowing to it as to that which must not, cannot be resisted; no acknowledgment of a high calling, no feeling of a relation to the past; only a claim to be independent, to think and feel differently from those who went before—a very natural tendency, surely, in men who have been under a grievous yoke, but offering little hope that they will be emancipated from it, or will not fall under a more grievous one still. No wonder then that the reality of the unseen should be lost in that very worship which was established as the witness of it, that the Jewish ceremonial should bind the spirit to earth instead of raising it. No wonder that the most vulgar of all outward things, the mere coin by help of which one is exchanged for another, should have become the great object of heart devotion. To speak of this people as not having now any sense of the relation of a people to its Sovereign, would be a mockery: that heavy loss is of course inevitable. It is far pleasanter to remember that the sense of a national existence, of a national calling, has, through all these centuries of degradation, not forsaken them. It has been upheld by that glorious hope of a Deliverer to come hereafter, which neither the Rabbinism of one of their schools, nor the Pantheism of another, has been able to extinguish. They had been almost six hundred years without a temple or a capital, scorned and hated by all people, when Mahomet arose; yet when he bade them join his standard as the reviver of the true faith of their

fathers, as the asserter of the Lord Jehovah against his enemies, they utterly refused the invitation. He thought, and perhaps rightly, that they were too degraded to understand the words which he spoke to them, too little worshippers of Him whom their Scriptures proclaimed, to believe that He could really interfere in the affairs of the world. The prophet's first great war, therefore, was directed against them. If they yielded they were not crushed, still less converted. The belief that they belonged to the true stock of Abraham, and he at best only to an illegitimate offshoot from it, that they were children of the promises, and he was not, sustained them. Here was the one sure thing which they could hold fast, a token that the lock of hair on the head of Samson, shorn, blinded, and captive, might still grow again. There was a reality and continuity in the national feeling of the Jew which the Islamite felt he could not encounter. He acknowledged a sovereign, his empire was to spread far and wide; but, except so far as the caliph or representative of Mahomet was concerned, this empire had no connection with any feeling of family, or even country. Mecca became indeed the shrine of religious worship for all Mahometans; but the practical centre of Mahometan society was at one time in Persia, at another in Spain, at last in Turkey. So that a system, in many respects like the Jewish, was in this one directly opposed to it. The Jews had grown from a family into a nation, and, so long as they continued a nation, were the great witnesses against all attempts at universal

sovereignty. The Mahometans, setting at nought family distinctions and national distinctions, attempted to bind all races and languages together, under the authority of one man, the successor of the Prophet.

This is a remark of great importance with a view to the subject on which we are now engaged. I have shown you that there are many points in which Christianity and Mahometanism both claim affinity with Judaism, as it was set forth in the Old Testament. Now we are come to a point in which they both separate from it. The Mahometan claims to be a universal religion; to set up a universal society. The Gospel does so too. The questions we have now to consider are, on what basis these universal societies respectively rest, and what is the relation between them.

I. We have seen that it is common to Judaism, to Mahometanism, to Christianity, that they assert the will of a living Being as the ground of all things, that they speak of Him as declaring Himself, as exercising a continual, not an occasional, government over men. This recognition of a Divine, personal, unseen Sovereignty; of One who is not sought out by men, but who seeks men; who calls them, and chooses them to do His work, is the strength of all three. Each one of them becomes helpless when this faith is lost, or is exchanged for any other. But if you look at the records of the Old Testament, you will be struck by nothing so much as this—that the Divine Being is continually said to be declaring HIS NAME to men. In other

words, it is not the *fact* of His existence chiefly which He is teaching them to acknowledge; but his character—what manner of Being He is. He calls upon them to obey a Will; each act of obedience brings them into closer acquaintance with Him who gives the command.

II. Hence we are able to understand the calling of the Jewish Prophet. We are expressly told that he is called to know this Name. The character of God reveals itself to him in the different circumstances of his own history, or his nation's history. He is taught that the evil which he is conscious of in himself, and which he sees in others, comes from unlikeness to the perfect Being in whose image he is created. He has but a glimpse of the Divine purposes and character, but it is such a glimpse as is suitable to his necessities and the necessities of his time. It enables him to understand what he is, and what his nature is, without God—what the blessing is of being called by Him—what the end of his calling is; namely, to make this Name known to his countrymen; to bring it out in opposition to the evil which is most prevailing among them.

III. And so too he understands, and is able to set forth, the purpose of his nation's calling. It, too, was to proclaim this righteous Name—to exhibit the conflict between God and all forms of evil—to show that righteousness is a reality, and not a dream—that the government of the world is based upon it—that wrong and oppression are not meant to triumph—that the earth is not meant to be a den of robbers.

IV. But such a Revelation as this, though it may be handed down in enduring letters—though it may become a possession for all generations, could never merely be delivered to men as a book of sentences or maxims; it must come forth in a gradual history — a history of Divine acts and human acts.

The Revelation assumes that God is altogether distinct from His creatures; it must enable us to *feel* that He is distinct from them. It declares that He has made man in His own image; it must enable us to feel practically that this assertion also is true. It treats man as we find him, full of wrong and evil; it treats man as capable of the highest good — as unsatisfied till he attains that good. We must learn how these two things are compatible. It must be a book of life, then, not merely of letters—a record of real men and real events. It must show how the Divine Will directed events, and disciplined men for that perfect good, that knowledge of Himself which he had designed for them. It must show how He cultivates those faculties in His creatures which he has given; how He enables them to overcome the darkness and evil in the midst of which they are struggling.

V. These are very obvious characteristics of the Jewish Revelation: its origin in a personal Being; its recognition of a righteous Name; its speaking of each class in the nation, and of the whole nation, as called to declare that Name; its human, practical, and historical form. But there is another characteristic as obvious. The history is always

pointing to a completion, and that completion in a Person. The Prophets have a vision of a King, who shall be the manifestation of God—the perfect image of Him—*the* Man—the Deliverer of the called nation, the ruler of all the nations: who should establish righteousness, should open the unseen world, should unite earth and heaven. For such an one, these Prophets say, David and his line were the preparation—He would really establish a universal kingdom. Now Christians affirm that the ground of universal society is the Revelation of this King. This Son of God, they say, has been manifested; He in whom this perfect Image dwelt; He has exhibited that Image in the life and acts of a man, in the poverty and death of a man; He, as a man, has exercised dominion over the powers of nature; as a man, wrestled with spiritual evil; as a man, triumphed over death; as a man, ascended to the right hand of God; He having so united man to God, has sent down His Spirit to dwell among men, that they might be one family, and glorify the Father of all in Him. The universal kingdom, say they, must be a fatherly kingdom. The Lord of it must be a suffering man, who is yet the Son of God. That which makes it one, and enables men to acknowledge God as one, must be a uniting, reconciling, Spirit, who raises them above the broken forms and shadows of earth—above those material things, in which there is nothing but division, into the true unity, the perfect, absolute Love.

This, according to the Christian's faith, being

the kingdom which is meant for all men, he must believe that God Himself designs that it should be made known to men; that all people should be brought into it. Men now, as much as formerly, must be commissioned servants of God for this end: there must be distinct callings tending to the accomplishment of it. All who have been brought to acknowledge the true King must have a share in the calling. But that particular work which was assigned to the Jewish nation, of putting down wrong and violence, of asserting justice and judgment, though it can never be obsolete, though each nation must be called upon in its own place and circumstances to fulfil it, cannot be the highest work of all. For He who did the highest work of all, did it by suffering, submission, sacrifice; the greatest triumph over the greatest evils was won in this way. Power manifested itself in weakness; He who was most meek, proved Himself to be most a King. He who most proved Himself to be Divine, did so by becoming one with the poorest and vilest. This was not a novelty in the history of the world; in a measure it had been shown before, that what is greatest is best able to stoop; that what can most bear to be crushed, has most capacity of life; that each thing must die before it can attain its perfection. The whole history of the world, rightly read, would illustrate this lesson: above all, it had been illustrated by the prophets and holy men of the Old Testament; nay, those very exertions of national strength and energy, which seem to set this principle at nought, were themselves exhibitions of it.

The glory of the Israelitish conquest of Canaan was this, that it was the triumph of weakness over strength, of infused spiritual might over the height of walls and the bulk of giants.

But though men had been learning this lesson gradually, the time which fully brought it out, which set at nought all pretensions of outward strength to dominion, which showed that the power of God Himself must be exhibited through weakness and death, in order that it may be felt to be the power of Love; this was of necessity the beginning of a new era. Henceforth surely every new event of history would demonstrate this truth afresh. Whatever power was working in the world must submit to this, or be broken by it. The evidence might be various, complicated, often contradictory; but it would all tend to this point—it would assert a Loving Will as the ground of all things; that that Will had been fully manifested to men in the person of a man, who delighted to do it; that it can only accomplish its ends by bringing the wills of men into subjection to itself.

Now Mahometanism formally sets at nought *this* idea of a Divine and universal kingdom; treats it as a mere imagination which outrages all simplicity. It goes back to the one principle of God's sovereignty; cares nothing for the gradual unfolding of a Name through a history of living acts; assumes that the Book is given to the prophet as a complete scheme of life; affirms that it is the commission of the faithful to diffuse faith in this Book, and in the fact of the Divine sovereignty through the world;

for this purpose invests its caliph or sovereign with absolute dominion. In the seventh century after Christ, Mahomet taught that the world was to begin its history again; but to begin it with no hope of a progress. That principle, which had been the mere starting-point of Jewish faith, the ground of what it was learning for nineteen hundred years, was to be the one, all-sufficing maxim of Mahometan life. The Koran was to make it the one all-sufficing maxim for generations.

Grand then as was the truth which Mahomet proclaimed, needful as the proclamation of it was for the overthrow of Jewish and Christian unbelievers, he did but re-affirm the primary confession of both; he denied that which made this primary confession consistent in itself and effectual for man. By this denial he sanctioned and adopted some of the worst, most characteristic superstitions and evils of the Jews and Christians against whom he protested. They had substituted words for realities; faith in notions for faith in God; he, in seeming to add a new revelation, destroyed the vital, historical progressive character of the old; in publishing newer and later notions, set mankind at a more hopeless distance from Him to whom these notions related. By this denial he made the acts and struggles of Islamism unintelligible. For beginning in weakness, triumphing through faith, this doctrine was a witness for the Christian principle which it set at nought. The grandeur of the Crescent can be understood only by the light which falls upon it from the Cross. Because the Mahometan recog-

nises a mere Will governing all things, and that Will not a loving Will, he is converted, as we saw that he had been in the course of his history, from a noble witness of a Personal Being into the worshipper of a dead necessity. Because he will not admit that there has been a Man in the world who was one with God—a Man who exercised power over nature, and yet whose main glory consisted in giving up Himself, therefore he cannot really assert the victory of man over visible things when he tries most to do so. He glorifies the might of arms when he most talks of the might of submission. Because he does not acknowledge a loving will acting upon men's wills, to humble them in themselves, and to raise them to God, therefore he becomes the enslaver of his fellows, therefore cheerful obedience to a master, which for a while distinguished him, becomes servitude to a tyrant. Because he will not acknowledge that the highest and divinest unity is that of love, but rests all upon the mere unity of sovereignty, he has never been able to establish one complete government upon the earth. It has been found that such a universality or unity is merely material; that it has no root in the nature of things—in the Divine order; that each new age must do something to weaken its integrity and hasten its dissolution.

Two questions, I hope, may have been partly answered by these observations. The first is, whether Christianity must abandon its claims to be a Revelation, in order that it may deal fairly with the Mahometan? The second, whether it can

strengthen and quicken that faith of his which we found was ready to perish? Whatever pretends only to be a better system of notions, a better scheme of conduct than his own, he will reject while he has the courage and constancy of his fathers: will only receive because he has sunk into a state in which it is indifferent what he holds, or rather, in which it is impossible for him with a real vital grasp to hold anything. Mahomet was believed by those, and those only, who felt that he brought a message from God; nothing which does not come as a message from God can reach the hearts of those who still acknowledge him. And of what form must the message be? If it sets at nought the first conditions of his original faith, nay, of his very existence, this he is certain cannot be from God: yea, he knows it must be from the devil. Only that which assumes this as its eternal foundation, and which deepens and expands it so that the facts of human life which seem least in accordance with it shall be shown to rest upon it, will carry that Divine stamp which the reason and conscience it awakens will recognise. Therefore we agree with the arguments of our opponents to this extent. Supposing they had proved the Gospel not to be a revelation, but only a product of the human intellect, their conclusion is incontestable. It ought not to be presented to the Mahometan; it is utter folly, or else cruelty, to inflict the proclamation upon him. But if it does not follow, from the likeness which has been detected between Mahometanism, Judaism, and Christianity, that they are all equally deceived

in their great postulate; if it appears that Christianity interprets that postulate, and prevents it from sinking into a dead notion; then we have found the power which can avenge the outrages and injuries of Islamism, preserving the precious fragments of truth which are lodged within it, forming them into a whole, making them effectual for the blessing of all the lands over which it reigns.

And surely, if this be the way in which we can and should speak to the Mahometan, no other can befit us in our intercourse with the Jew. Whatever there is in him of strength or earnestness clings to the belief that God spake to his fathers. Systems, rabbinical and philosophical, may choke that belief; money-getting habits may almost extinguish it. But it haunts him; it is an oppression to him, from which in these ways he seeks to be delivered when he is in an evil state of mind; it is his only consolation and hope when he rises into a higher one. With it is connected that sense of nationality which is even yet his noblest characteristic, however mixed it may be with sin and weakness. To it is linked that hope of a coming Deliverer which sometimes cheers him amidst all the misery and anguish of his actual condition. A religion which is not a message from God, not an unveiling of Him, is at once felt by him to be a phantasy. He may adopt the modern talk about the religious instinct or principle creating its own object; but it is in his mouth, if in no other person's, absolutely insincere. Again then we say, if Christianity be not a Revelation, or we do not think it is, we are right to keep it from the

Jew, as being something with which his mind can have no possible affinity. But if it is this; if it is such a revelation as rests upon his data, as justifies his nationality, as establishes his hope of a Deliverer, while it takes from these convictions that narrowness which he is beginning to find incompatible with his apprehensions respecting the condition and greatness of man; shows how the nationality, without being lost, may be expanded into a universal fellowship; hinders the vision of a future revelation from degenerating into the expectation of a sensual and mundane felicity, by declaring that the Redeemer has come already to claim Man for his possession, and to rescue him from his earthly bondage: then we may feel in this case that there is one power, and but one in the world, which can raise the fallen Israelite to a new and spiritual life.

There is, however, another view of the relations of Christianity with Judaism and Mahometanism —another, and a most important one. If Christianity deserve that character in which I have endeavoured to present it, it has, and it ought to have, its Judaical and Mahometan side. It may, as I have said, alienate this part of its own possession; it may forget the great truth which it has inherited from Judaism, the truth of a living King and Lord of the World; it may try to sever the doctrine of Christ from this absolute and eternal ground; then that doctrine loses all its meaning, becomes a shadow, and not a substance—a dogma, not a living word. Then God does assuredly raise up some witness for this truth, lest men should be

robbed of it. But it is also possible for Christians to exalt the Judaical or Mahometan side of Christianity exclusively, to become, in fact, practically Jews or Mahometans, though they do not belong to the family of Abraham, and may care nothing about the Arabian Prophet. In practice Christians have done this when they have attempted to copy Jewish example in the manner of propagating their faith: really copying not that, but Mahometan example: for we truly copy Jewish example, as I have shown you, when we go forth as national bodies, under our national sovereign, to resist wrong and robbery, and to maintain the position which God has given us; we copy Mahometan example when we attempt to spread the principles of the Universal Family, which is based upon the Love of God, and the Sacrifice of Christ, and the gift of the Spirit of meekness and of charity, by any other methods than those of love, and sacrifice, and meekness. We seem to copy Jewish example—we really copy Mahometan example, when we seek for any visible, mortal man to reign over the Universal Family; for the Jewish king reigned not over the universe, but over a particular nation; and so soon as a universal society grew out of the national one, it was the glorious proclamation that an Unseen King, who had ascended to the right hand of God, was its only Sovereign. We seem to copy Jewish example—we really copy Mahometan example, when we set visible and outward rewards before us as the prizes of our high calling; for though the Jew lived especially to assert God's dominion over the earth,

and to rule it, and subdue it for Him, yet the reward he always kept in sight was, that he might know Him who exercised righteousness and judgment in the earth, that he might awake up after His likeness, and be satisfied with it. In like manner we copy the example of the modern Jew and of the Mahometan, not of the ancient Jew, or if of the ancient Jew, only of the formal, heartless Pharisee, when we receive the Bible not as a record of actual doings, of actual intercourse between a living Being and His creatures upon earth, but only as a collection of notions and opinions, about which we are to dispute and tear each other in pieces. Still more effectually do we assume the character of the servant of the Prophet, of the degenerate Israelite, when we set up the dry confession of God's sovereignty against His righteousness, supposing that His acts are ever acts of self-will; that His glory is ever anything but the glory of purity, and goodness, and truth. In all these ways we may prove that there is indeed a very near relation between our belief and theirs, inasmuch as we can hold the one under the name of the other.

Again, we may adopt what some would call, I think wrongly, a merely theoretical Judaism, or Mahometanism; we may seem to copy Jewish example by asserting the simplicity of God's nature; by denying the possibility of a man manifesting forth the Unseen God, by rejecting the belief of a Father and of a Son, and of a Spirit who binds them together in an ever-blessed Unity. Why this

is not the adoption of the true Judaical Faith, but the rejection of it, I have explained already; it has been ever ready to issue in the dryness of modern Judaism, wherein all which we see alive in the Old Testament is petrified. Now especially that result is inevitable; for now, less than in any former day, is it possible to speak of God as if He stood in no relation to man. The tendency of our time is to confound Him with His Creatures, with the works of His hands: to lose all thought of His distinctness; to regard Him as only the conception of man's mind, a sort of synonyme for man's thinking faculty, or for the life which dwells in things. Against such notions the records of Judaism and Mahometanism are mighty and standing protests; but they are more and more ineffectual protests. They show why such notions of God can never satisfy human beings who know their own necessities; not what these notions signify, and how they are to be satisfied.

It is true, then, that the temptations of Jews and Mahometans are our temptations; that we carry their practical confusions and divisions within our own bosoms. At every moment we are liable to fall into them. Each careless step we take, each unholy temper we indulge, the neglect of our duties, the tolerance of our evil, is always increasing the danger. It is true also that the Christian has no right to undervalue any good thing which he finds in any Jew or Mahometan; it flows from a principle which he ought to hold fast, and which ought to produce the same or better fruits in him. While

we acknowledge that every right act in them deserves tenfold more admiration than it could deserve in us, and that all our evil acts must be done with ten-thousandfold greater sense of wrong and less of excuse, this confession does not in the least affect what we believe; for Christianity is not concerned in justifying our sins, but in condemning them: it does not say that any particular set of men, calling themselves by the Christian name, are better than others; but it says that God will be true, though every man be a liar: that His kingdom will be established whether we who belong to it care that it should be established, or cut ourselves off from it. And the same conscience which tells us of our evil, forces each of us to say: 'This evil comes not from my faith, but from indifference to it. It comes not from my holding too fast by that which is simple and old when I might be seeking for a new and finer Christianity. It comes simply from my forgetting the Creed of my childhood. For if I did believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, I should be acknowledging that Will which Jews and Mahometans acknowledge as the ground of all things: only I should be confessing it as a loving and fatherly Will. If I did believe in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, who descended into hell, and rose again the third day from the dead, who ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, who from thence shall

come to judge the quick and dead, I should feel and understand that there is indeed a Man who will reign over the world, and judge it as Jews and Mahometans teach; but that this Man is the Son of God and the Son of Man; one who before He claimed our homage, submitted to our curse, wrestled with death and overcame; who has already set up His throne in the highest region of all, and calls upon every voluntary creature in his heart and spirit to do him homage. If I did believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of Sins, the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlasting, I should feel there was a mighty, Divine Power working in us, to make us more completely servants of a human king and of the Divine Will, than Jews and Mahometans have ever dreamed they could be: to make us members of a universal society, as Islamites wish to be; to make our bodies more triumphant over death, more glorious than they have thought possible; but, besides this, to make us sons of God —brethren with Him who is the Son of God— brethren with those who have passed into another world, who are perfectly freed from temptation and sin, who have inherited not a sensual Paradise, but a kingdom of righteousness, and peace, and love.'

## PART II.—LECTURE II.

*The relation between Christianity and Hindooism generally compared. Mistakes concerning it. Investigation of its nature. The twice-born man. The Image of Brahm. Incarnations. Sacrifice. Dangers to Christianity from its Hindoo side. How Christianity can and cannot satisfy Hindoos.*

THE subject which I propose to consider in my present Lecture, is the relation between Christianity and Hindooism. That such a relation exists has been felt by most persons, different as their theories have been respecting the nature or the cause of it. Christian writers on Hindoo antiquities have spoken of various traditions, which they suppose must have been derived, originally, from Scripture narratives—of various Hindoo doctrines which have an obvious resemblance to some that form part of the orthodox faith of Christendom. Infidel writers have been equally willing to notice these correspondences, and have turned them to their own account. If any part of the Hindoo theories about the origin of the world recalls the Mosaic narrative, this is evidence to them that each was equally the work of some early, imperfect theorist, that neither has any claim to Divine authority. If the similarity is of an historical kind, the notorious confusion of the Hindoo records throws new doubt upon the Jewish. If, again, the likeness be between the great mysteries of the Christian

faith, and the more recondite Hindoo speculations, what, they ask, does this show but that these mysteries are the results of certain trains of human thought, and have only been attributed to a higher origin, because our forefathers had not the same means as we have of tracing them out in the minds of those whom they considered ignorant and idolatrous as we do?

I do not wish to conceal any of these objections; I am rather anxious to put them forward at the outset of my inquiry, because they concern not so much the conclusions to which it may lead, as the method in which it shall be pursued. It is no doubt true that Christian writers have often caught at external, superficial indications of a resemblance between their own faith and that of other men, and have strained evidence to show how it must have been produced. And I am satisfied that every such attempt to make out a case by ingenious twisting of words or perversion of facts, is sorely punished. For the impression left upon our minds, supposing the likeness completely established, would be no more than this; that certain opinions of certain people upon matters of history, or upon questions of a very subtle and refined nature, had something to do with opinions existing among ourselves, and might, perhaps, have proceeded from the same source. But the mere theories which we find in the sacred books of different nations, either about the past state of the world, or the system of it now, though they are worthy of our study and reflection, as hints (not always the most important hints)

towards understanding what is the radical principle and belief of the race which adopts them, are not themselves identical with that principle and that belief. Now when this is the case with that to which we compare the Christian doctrines, it is far too likely that we shall begin to think of them in the same way. They will appear to us also notions and opinions about certain great subjects; *divine* notions and opinions we may call them; but a mere name will not change their character: we shall not feel that they have to do with our own life and being; we shall regard them as truths which we are to hold, not as truths which are to hold us, which are to give us a standing ground for time and for eternity. I do not wonder, then, nor am I altogether sorry, that those who have put forward this view of the relations between Hindooism and Christianity should have been taught that their own weapons may be used against them. Such discoveries, instead of shaking our faith, may lead us to feel more diligently for the foundation of it; to ask whether other nations have not given evidence that they too need such a foundation; whether they are not craving to be told what it is.

In considering the relations between Mahometanism and Christianity, we did not satisfy ourselves with showing that certain precepts of the Koran corresponded to certain precepts of the Bible, and that the one was wrong when it had departed from the other. It seemed necessary to examine whether the main principle of Mahometan life, that which had given strength to its hosts when they were

most strong, be or be not embodied in Christianity, and whether there or here it has most vitality, and is most in harmony with other principles equally important. If we could not find that the great Mahometan truth was asserted more distinctly, mightily, livingly in Christianity than in Mahometanism, we did not feel that Christianity could ever be a substitute for Mahometanism. If that for which the Mahometans were content to give up their lives, were merely a formal proposition in our faith, we were sure we could not sustain ourselves against them. If anything wherein we differed from them weakened this principle, that was so much of evidence against us. Nothing seemed sufficient to us but the discovery that the belief in an Absolute Living God actually ruling in the world seeking men not first sought by them, which is the root of all their convictions, is the root of ours; that Christianity perishes even more completely than Mahometanism when this truth is forgotten; that this principle has lost its power over the Mahometan mind, or been changed into one of the most opposite character, just because it wants the support of other kindred truths, which belong to the essence of Christianity.

Precisely in the same manner I would deal with the present subject. In my second Lecture I considered what were the permanent characteristics of Hindooism, those which had survived in all its changes, and made its different changes intelligible, those which had resisted all opposition, even from truths which seemed mightier than they and from

men who were braver and stronger than those who upheld them. I would now inquire whether these characteristics have their counterparts in Christianity; whether they enter into the substance of it, as they do into the substance of Hindooism; whether the difficulties and contradictions which we found had grown naturally out of these convictions, and yet had weakened and impaired them, belong also to our belief; whether in that belief these Hindoo truths are or are not reconciled with those to which they seemed utterly hostile. I have said again and again, that I do not think we prove our confidence in the divinity of that which we confess by subjecting it to light tests, by arguing that this or that is not justly required of it. Whatever has been found necessary in the course of six thousand years' experience, we have a right to ask of that which offers itself as the faith for mankind. And I do not believe that it ever has shrunk, or ever will shrink, from any demands of this kind that we make upon it.

The position of the Brahmin in reference to the rest of Hindoo society was that which seemed to us at once the most obvious outward mark of the system, and its essential characteristic. Here was the radical distinction between Hindooism and Mahometanism; here was the key to its connection with Buddhism, and to the divergence of the latter from it. The Greeks under Alexander had seen that the Hindoo people were cast in the Brahminical mould—they retain this mould under the English government in the nineteenth century after Christ.

Whatever principle then be the ground of the belief in the superiority of the Brahmin to other men, can be no mere accident of Hindoo opinion, no mere notion in the sacred books; it must belong to the innermost heart of the race. This principle we found expressed in that distinction between the twice-born man and other men, which is the characteristical one of the Menu code. All mere distinctions of occupation, even the distinctions of the four original classes, seem to resolve themselves into this. This, therefore, had endured, though two of those classes had disappeared, and though the whole caste system had undergone great outward modifications. This had continued universal amidst all its local varieties. Nor was there much difficulty in ascertaining the ground on which the distinction rested. First of all, it stood on the conviction that there is in man that which is meant to converse with an Unseen Spiritual Being, that this is the vocation of the highest wisest man, of him who is properly *the* man, who is alone able to guide and rule his fellows. Next, upon the consideration that this is not the natural, ordinary state of men, that this is an ignominious, degraded, animal state, out of which whoever is raised, must be raised by different acts of purification, acts which are to bring him into a relation more or less intimate with Brahm. Thirdly, we saw that the idea of hereditary succession became involved with this, that the twice-born men became a distinct family, to be preserved pure from generation to generation.

I repeat these observations in this place the more

carefully, because I am anxious that you should not suppose I am attaching any force to a mere phrase like that of the twice-born man. This phrase instantly suggests to every Christian an idea with which all his life he has been familiar. Hence, it might lead us to one of those hasty analogies against which I have already warned you. A person thoughtfully and earnestly considering such a subject as this for a great practical purpose, will be suspicious of himself when he finds that he is noticing a verbal correspondence; he will be aware of the temptation to build an argument upon it, and will understand how very easily he may be deceived by a translation from another language, made by men who were formed in an English school of thought, and were, perhaps, glad to catch at a rendering which would bring a lively and well-known image before the minds of their readers. I am quite willing, therefore, to forget this expression altogether, or to adopt any other that an Oriental scholar shall give me as a substitute for it, which has no resemblance to our own sacred dialect. It is the thing, and not the word, I wish you to notice; the deep conviction which has wrought itself into the mind of the Hindoo, and which has gone along with him through every stage of his history. Still more earnestly would I remind you that it is not the words New Birth, or Second Birth, which characterise Christianity, but the meaning indicated by them. To realise that conviction, let us, as on the last occasion, look at the context of the Scriptures, not confining ourselves to the

New Testament, but beginning with the opening of Jewish history.

I. You will remember how we traced the idea of a Divine call through the whole of that history. I referred to it then for the purpose of showing how everything in our faith, as in the Mahometan, rests upon the recognition of an act done on the part of God. But in that call was involved the idea of distinction, of separation. Abraham is called out of his father's house, he is set apart to be the head of a peculiar family, and the whole of that family have a sign of the separation appointed for them. When the nation is called out of its Egyptian bondage, not only is this sign carefully preserved; not only is every institution expressly contrived to keep this people distinct from other people; but within the nation itself distinctions begin to be established. The priest is called out to the special work of presenting sacrifices, a whole tribe is set apart to the service of the tabernacle. They are carefully designated; the anointing oil is poured upon their heads; garments of honour and beauty are given them; Holiness to the Lord is inscribed on the forehead of the high priest. The last fact shows you how completely the idea not only of a separation is involved in these appointments, but of a separation for the very purpose to which the Brahmin is devoted. The priest is dedicated to the service of the Unseen Jehovah. He is to enter into His presence, to hold awful converse with Him. His separation is never for an instant spoken of as having another object than

this. A gross animal taste, a disposition to honour visible things and bow before them, is characteristic of men generally; the elect people are taken from the surrounding nations, that they may be emancipated from this slavish tendency. Yet the Jew is reminded that he is liable to it like other men; that he must be cut off from it; that he must look upon himself as intended for intercourse with that which the eye cannot tell him of. The priest explains the end of the nation's existence. It is expressly declared that the tribe of Levi is taken instead of the firstborn of all the families of Israel.

Here you see one very clear indication of the principle which Hindoo society embodies. And this principle is not less characteristic of the later history than of the earlier. True, the people began in process of time to mix with the nations round about them, and to adopt their habits. But the wise man always warned them, and the fact proved, that hereby they were destroying themselves. When they forgot their covenant, when they no longer looked upon themselves as a chosen, separated people, above all when their priests lost sight of their own vocation, and the purpose of it, feebleness, division, subjection to their neighbours, followed of course. The fact does not change in the least degree from one generation to another. The only change is in the increased knowledge which the Jews obtain of the reason and ground of the fact. This progress is very remarkable. The prophets told them more and more distinctly, that they required to be circumcised in heart; that

the separation must not be merely from surrounding people, but from an evil and corruption in themselves; that if they remembered the covenant of their God, and clave to him, they would overcome not merely the Moabites and Edomites, but a perverse, grovelling habit of soul, which was the cause of their idolatry; that if they forgot this covenant, they would sink first under the yoke of their own inclinations, then under that of Nineveh or Babylon. The more you read the Old Testament prophets the more you will see that amidst all the various circumstances which surround them, amidst all the different methods of instruction which they are taught to adopt, this is their great burthen. But is there not a change in the New Testament? Did not our Lord destroy that separation which the teachers of the old time had been so careful to establish? Did not his coming put Jews and Gentiles on a level? We must not permit vague phrases of this kind to hide from us the fact that our Lord, so far from obliterating the principle for which the Jewish nation had testified, asserted it, established it, expressed it for the first time in all its clearness and fulness. That, He said, which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven. In this language He gathers up the very meaning of the old dispensation; shows us what a truth was involved in every part of it; how every part had been a preparation for the full revelation of this truth. His coming was, no doubt, to destroy

the barrier between Jew and Gentile; but not till that barrier had been proved to have its justification in the very condition and being of man, in his relation to God and to the world. If there is a flesh in man, by obedience to which he becomes degraded, sensual, idolatrous, if he naturally is obedient to this flesh, and can only attain the rights of a spiritual creature, when the Lord of all raises him above his nature, above himself, then we can understand why a whole nation should have been called by its position in reference to other nations, by its strength and weakness, righteousness and sins, by the experience of all its individual members, to set forth this mighty fact in which the eternal destinies of mankind must be involved. And this testimony we hold is not, and cannot be, obsolete. The Christian Church claims to be a body of twice-born men; claims to be a witness of that mighty privilege which men have of conversing with the Unseen and Infinite, as well as a witness of the tendency which there is in man to be merely animal and sensual. The Christian Church claims a set of ministers who shall represent the spiritual glory and privileges of the whole body, shall be instruments in overcoming the low and grovelling propensities of its members. Here, then, is a principle which is as characteristic of our faith as it is of the Hindoo, which has scarcely moulded Oriental society more than it has moulded the society of modern Europe.

II. It is impossible to separate the belief in the superiority of the Brahmin to other men, from the

belief in his relation to Brahm. Technically we may call one a political, the other a theological idea; practically, the former may, for a while, survive the latter. But in any serious investigation of the grounds of the religious system they must be contemplated as identical. Brahm is Wisdom or Light: the Brahmin is the reflection of this Wisdom or Light. Such a view of the Divinity, and of the way in which man is related to him, is found in different modifications among all those people who are members of what is called the Indo-Germanic stock, and, perhaps, in some who do not belong to it. While creative Will, Command, Sovereignty, Separation from man, are the attributes of Him whom the Arabian proclaimed to be the one God, Persians, Greeks, Goths, each recognised Intelligence, an Intelligence communicable to man, and quickly involving human worship, as the object of their reverence. But long before this reverence had taken any definite form among these people, hear how strongly it was expressed by those Hebrew sages who seemed to live for the assertion of the Mahometan truth: "I Wisdom dwell with Prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. I am Understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, and all the judges of the earth. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I

brought forth: while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the deep: when He established the clouds above: when He strengthened the fountains of the deep: when He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when he appointed the fountains of the earth: then I was by Him as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."

Here we have the origin of the universe ascribed to Wisdom; kings and judges are said to rule by Wisdom; Wisdom is said from the first to have had her delight in the sons of men. Is this an isolated passage; the dream of some particular writer, who had perhaps been instructed by Chaldeans? On the contrary, it expresses the very spirit of the Jewish economy, as it is presented to us in the writings of all its historians and prophets. The wise king or the wise prophet is ever spoken of in Scripture as having the divine Wisdom, the divine Word with him, nay, in him. He does not shrink from the pretension. In his truest, humblest state of mind, he feels and confesses himself to be only a reflection of the divine Light, an utterer of the divine Voice. He charges it as a sin upon the false teachers, that they speak words out of their own hearts. Here again, the New Testament takes up, expands, and interprets the language of the

Old. "In the beginning," says St. John, "was the Word. In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men. And the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." Of these words, and of some which I have for the present omitted, St. John's Gospel and his First Epistle are the exposition. They declare what this life was which had been the light of men, how it was manifested, who it was that could say, "I am the Light of the World; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness."

III. But we detected a yet deeper conception beneath that one of the relation of the Brahmin to Brahma; we found that Brahma himself was supposed to be the expression or manifestation of Brahm, who must be thought of only as Absolute, Self-existent. These two ideas are inseparable. The God is said to have sought for a companion of his throne, and having considered and rejected all animal natures, at last to have found his one adequate image in man. This thought, we saw was a pregnant one: a dualism, not of opposition but of consort, might be traced through the whole mythology.

Now, in the passage which I quoted from the Book of the Proverbs, you cannot fail to have noted the words, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways. I was with Him as one brought up with Him." Beneath this Wisdom, this teacher of the Sons of Men, this Ruler of Princes, by whom the sea and earth have been formed, there is still a deeper and more unfathomable essence. Is this a

dream, mixing inconsistently with the rest of the discourse? You cannot banish it without destroying the sense of the context. Does it stand apart from the general course and tenor of Jewish Revelation? You cannot understand the most striking, turning points of that Revelation, if you determine to pass by these words as incomprehensible or insignificant. Habitually the Jew believed that He whom he worshipped dwelt in the thick darkness; no eye had seen Him; it was unlawful to conceive any likeness of Him. But he also believed that this Lord had revealed Himself to Abraham, as he sat by the tent-door in the heat of the day on the plain of Mamre; that he had been the Captain of the Hosts of Israel; that He had spoken to and by every holy seer. Do you say, "These were difficulties; they look like contradictions in the faith of this people; they seem fragments from different religions—witnesses that they were not, as divines pretend, the subjects of a continuous, harmonious revelation?" I admit the difficulty; I see why those who have never discovered it in themselves, should suppose it must have arisen from the blending of two incompatible traditions. I admit, further, that the apparent contradiction could not be removed from the mind of the Jew; that it must have haunted him — sometimes have tormented him; that the vision of a reconciliation will only from time to time have cheered him, in the fulfilment of lowly duties, after hours of deep sorrow, in the temple-worship; that a verbal reconciliation could not satisfy him, or any man. But *a* recon-

ciliation he and the Hindoo both demand; the penalty of not finding it is—Modern Judaism, or Modern Hindooism. In that passage, which I purposely mutilated when I quoted it before, St. John says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." He states broadly, and in union, the two truths which the former dispensation had beheld separately, each of which had seemed at times to stifle the other, each of which had again seemed necessary to the other. But he does not attempt to bring them together in words, until, as he believes, they had first been brought together in fact. The Word, he says, was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

IV. I would beg you to remark how the Evangelist speaks of Him here, first as a Word, then as a Son. The Hindoo dreamed of Light proceeding from a fountain of Light; the Greek of a Child springing from a Father. Naturally, and without effort, St. John recognises both conceptions; for the divine Wisdom is with him no abstraction; the divine Son is with him no material image. Hence there is no sudden transition from the divinest part of the Christian lore to that which connects it with the popular faith of Hindooism. *The Word was made Flesh.* A divine Incarnation is affirmed to be the great instrument for redressing the evils of the world. It is declared that He who had held converse with holy men in their hearts, He whose

life was the light of men, had brought himself nigh to all, so that He could be seen with human eyes—handled with human hands.

I have said that the Scripture speaks of *this* Incarnation as the means for the redress of mortal evils. But if we will use its language strictly, we shall make a closer approximation to the Hindoo apprehension: we shall say that it was expressly to deliver men out of the power of the Destroyer, to break in pieces his kingdom, that the Eternal Word became one with his creatures. Nowhere more distinctly than in Christian Theology is there the recognition of the fact which the Siva worshipper perceives; nowhere less effort to make men comfortable by dissembling the fact, that misery and death have gotten hold of the earth; nowhere a more emphatic affirmation of the witness which the heart and consciences of men have borne everywhere, but with special earnestness in Hindostan, that in them, in the region of man's inner being, is the fiercest debate with the evil which he sees without; that there, in that region, he has to encounter it in its highest form, in its most radical principle. The Gospel does not start with a philosophical lie; what man by bitter experience has discovered to be his condition, it assumes to be his condition.

V. But dare we admit the genuineness of that other page in the book of human experience which the Siva worshippers would blot out? The Incarnation answers this question; affirms the Preserver to be the Lord of all; affirms Him through the

whole course of His government to have been upholding this earth and those who dwell upon it; to have been interfering for their rescue. Here, in this very Incarnation, and that which follows from it, is the assertion of his complete dominion; the answer to the Destroyer's claim to be in any sense the Creator, to have any dominion whatsoever over that race which has paid him such fearful homage.

That which meets us first in the records of the life of the Son of Man upon earth, after He had been declared to be the Son of God, is a conflict, which no human eye could behold, with the Destroyer; next, the testimony which He gave outwardly of the truth He had in that secret battle made good, by delivering the bodies and spirits of men out of their bondage to inward miseries and inward tyrants. Yet never for an instant did He speak of the claim which He put forth for the dominion of the Gracious Preserver and Father, as a new claim. Never when He spoke of setting up His Kingdom did he admit that He was not King of kings and Lord of lords before. The Jewish calling and economy had been asserting for generations the fact that the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgressions and sin, was the one Lord; that He had taken this nation to be His, to make them witnesses of His righteousness and government; that every one who received His Revelation of Himself, who submitted to Him, and trusted in Him, was thereby brought into a righteous

state, was thereby enabled to understand the purpose of His government, and to receive the blessings of it.

VI. Trust in this Being lay at the foundation of the life of the Jewish people. That trust involved Sacrifice. They gave up themselves; so they rose out of the dominion of that Spirit of self-will to which others were paying homage; so they were able in their daily acts to resist him, and defy him, and to declare that neither in himself, nor in any of his innumerable forms, images, apparitions, had he any title to the obedience of God's servants. The Jew was taught that he was devoted, sacrificed to this Lord, who had chosen his nation, who preserved it from generation to generation, who exercised righteousness and judgment in all the earth. It was He who called the priest, appointed his vocation; to Him he was to bring the sacrifices for himself and his nation; to Him, and to no visible things; to Him, and to no unrighteous, hateful power. Sacrifice was the bond of the nation's existence; sacrifice the act by which man realised his place in it, and came to understand its privileges. The meaning, the law, the ground of sacrifice was interpreting itself to the conscience and reason of the true Israelite by every step of his discipline, by every act of obedience, by his sin, by his repentance. More and more he felt it to be the law of the universe; apart from which its very existence is a contradiction; since only in perfect submission to the perfect Will can any creature attain its life and freedom. He was prepared therefore for that

announcement which the Apostles of our Lord made so boldly, that the Son of the Father, the Deliverer of Man, had offered himself a perfect Sacrifice to God; that He had accomplished this act by entering into all the miseries of man; that with this loving, filial sacrifice, He who was perfect Love was well pleased; that in it was the Atonement and Reconciliation of all Creation to Him, through its original Head; that in the strength of it each man might offer himself to God as a reasonable, holy, acceptable Sacrifice.

I hope I have shown in these last hints that if the other portions of the faith of the Hindoos have that which answers to them in ours, their faith in the might and blessing of Sacrifice is one in which we are bound with all our hearts to participate. If there be any acts in past or present ages on which we can think with delight, which we can be sure had Christ's mark upon them, which have wrought mightily, though in general secretly, for the deliverance of men from idols, from intellectual or spiritual plagues, here has been the root and spring of them. But it is just in the point of deepest sympathy with this ancient people that we arrive at the secret of our opposition. Upon the question to *whom* the Sacrifice should be offered, whether by it we propitiate a Siva, or surrender ourselves in faith and trust to Him who cares for us and loves us; whether it is to overcome the reluctance of an enemy, or is the offering of our own reluctant wills to a Father in the name of one who has presented and is ever presenting His own filial and complete Sacrifice—

upon this issue, let us understand it well, our controversy with Hindooism turns.

The idea of a Kehama obtaining a power from his gods which they cannot afterwards resist to curse and plague his fellow-men, is involved in the one doctrine, and is ready at any moment to come forth in a form of terrific wickedness, in the likeness of some Man-God. The Agony of the Garden, the spirit of the 22nd Psalm, the Cross of Him who became nothing that the Power, and grace, and Wisdom of God might through Him shine forth upon all creatures; here we see the Christian Sacrifice, the sacrifice of the God-Man. This Spirit of Sacrifice He promises to all who are made the Sons of God in Him. Everything then depends in our dealings with the Hindoos—let me add, everything in our dealings with ourselves—upon the degree in which we grasp this distinction, or lose sight of it. I showed you that we are open to all Mahometan temptations. So are we to all Hindoo temptations. We may exalt a priestly caste, as if it were set up to make the rest of men Sudras; we may dwell upon the privilege of holding intercourse with the Divine Being, till we sink into self-worshippers; we may revenge ourselves for this abstract idolatry; by plunging into outward idolatry; we may at last bow down before Siva, who we should have known was in all these ways drawing us into his worship, since every act of pride, spiritual, intellectual, sensual, is a mystery of his worship.

These dangers have discovered themselves in former periods of the world; seeing that they

appertain to human nature, we may be as liable to them as those who lived in any country or age. Is it an escape from them to deny the existence of a priesthood, to say that intercourse with heaven is a dream, to scoff at all popular feelings, to maintain that the conscience of evil is nothing, that sacrifices are a mockery? Or, rather is the escape from them to maintain that a priesthood exists for the purpose of raising men above animal degradation, as a witness of the great rights of humanity; that, because intercourse with heaven was intended for the spirit of man, and has been made possible for men, therefore lowliness and self-abasement are our most proper and reasonable conditions; that poor and rich, priests and Sudras, have been alike looked upon, sympathised with, redeemed, raised to human privileges by Him who took the nature of all; that every man may be delivered from an evil conscience, that he may renounce and scorn the authority of the evil spirit, that he may offer himself in Christ's name to God? This is the alternative for India and for England. In other words, the question is, whether we hold a system of opinions or a revelation from God. All Brahminical acts, services, sacraments, imply an effort or scheme on the part of the creature to raise himself to God. All Christian acts, services, sacraments, imply that God has sought for the creature that He might raise him to Himself. The differences in our thoughts of God, of the priest, of the sacrifice, all go back to this primary difference. When we get into the region of conceptions and speculations, all our views of that which is divine

will be fragmentary; some of them will be very dark, because they are derived from our own experience; either these become predominant, or in seeking to rid ourselves of them we deny facts and extinguish great portions of our own being. To believe really, practically, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all, we must believe that He has caused this light to arise and shine; we must seek to walk in it, and to see all things by it.

In my second Lecture, I referred to the condition of the Britons, who had parted with their original faith and had received Roman civilisation, when they were no longer protected by Roman arms. I said the example was one which the statesmen of British India would do well to ponder. To abolish human sacrifices is good; but a blank will be left in the nation's heart even by the loss of such practices as these which must be filled up, or we shall impoverish those whom we seek to reform. But there is another, sadder side of this history, one which refers not to the conquered, but to the conquerors. Britain uttered her groan because Rome could no longer send forth her legions. The hundred hands which had been stretched from east to west, from north to south, were palsied; for the giant who moved them had become a child. And whence came this decay of strength? All the signs of it still belonged to Rome. From the city of Jerusalem to the city of York she had traversed the earth with her roads; within her own walls were the mightiest trophies of art over nature. Her history told by what wonderful agencies human and natural, by

how evidently divine an ordinance, her glory had been achieved. And to the gloss of civilisation had been added the gloss of Christianity. The Emperor had believed when other help was failing, that in the might of the Cross he might still conquer. The sign was indeed there, but it was marked upon the standard, not written upon the hearts, of those rulers of the world. They saw not what it meant; how it interpreted and crowned all that had been great in their history hitherto; how it separated the real great from the real little; how it sanctified all those feelings of obedience, duty, reverence for unseen law, self-devotion, by which the city had risen from nothing; how it poured contempt upon dominion, except as an instrument by which the highest might serve the lowest, upon glory, except as it grew out of humiliation, and was the exaltation of man above himself. The civilised Christian Roman had lost the heart, the reverence, the faith, which belonged to his rude Pagan ancestors; that Christianity and civilisation might be victorious, the miserable patrons of both were swept away.

If it is so with us; if our civilisation merely consists in those outward conveniences and mechanical inventions which are the fruits of it, assuredly we shall impart but that which we have; we shall communicate only our external polish to the nations which we rule; their inward condition under our hands will become less strong, less sound, than it was before. If our belief in Christianity floats upon the surface of our minds, just keeps itself alive by a few phrases and conventions in the mul-

titude of our pursuits, if it offers no greater evidence of its vitality than the debates and controversies which it engenders, assuredly we cannot present it to the Hindoo with the slightest hope that he will receive it in exchange for a faith which, be it good or evil, has governed his life. Only if our cultivation be of that kind which is truly human, which delights to discern the essential humanity of each nation, to honour it, to sympathise with it, shall we understand that which is peculiar in our subjects, or reform that which is corrupt in them. Only if we have received the Gospel as the answer from heaven to inward perplexities which we have a thousand times tried to stifle, but could not; only if we have learnt that these perplexities are the groans of the human spirit within us crying for deliverance; can we with honest confidence speak to that spirit in whatever region it dwells, in whatever language, clear or inarticulate, it utters its voice, as one spake to it of old, "Say not, Who shall ascend up into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down; or, Who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring Christ again from the dead: for lo! the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, even the word of faith which we preach."

## PART II.—LECTURE III.

*How this relation should be detected. The descent of the Spirit. Relation of the Christian Church to the Jewish. Supposed analogy to the relations of Buddhism with Brahminism. The resemblances and difference between Christianity and Buddhism. The Buddhist side of Christianity threatening its existence. How Christians may speak to Buddhists elsewhere, especially in China.*

THAT Buddha and Brahm are words of cognate if not of the same signification; that Buddhism is nevertheless essentially opposed to Brahminism, seeing that it denies the existence of a priestly caste; that the Buddhists are scattered over many lands, and have adopted various forms of belief and opinion; that their universal characteristic is reverence for the human intellect, which they think of as one, though diffused through many persons, and as having its central manifestation in the Lama; that Buddhism exists in China beside two other forms of opinion with which it does not combine—I have explained in my third Lecture of the First Part. It is now our business to inquire whether this system has any or what affinities with Christianity. If the inquiry is conducted fairly, it must satisfy certain conditions. The resemblance which we detect must be not in the superficial accidental parts of either faith, but in their radical and essential characteristics; these must not be assumed by

the inquirer on his own authority, but must have some clear voucher that they are recognised as radical and essential characteristics by Buddhists and Christians respectively; the likeness must not be to that side of Buddhism which coincides with Hindooism—otherwise we shall only be repeating the last Lecture—but to the opposite side.

The festival of Whitsuntide is observed in all parts of Christendom; here in England, among the Protestants in the north of Europe, by the Romanists in the south, by Greeks and Armenians, by the descendants of English, French, and Spanish settlers in North and South America. It is felt by all these to commemorate a great event, the event which marks the establishment of the Christian Church in the world. They derive their notion of this event from the record of it in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. There we are told, that on a certain day which had long been kept as a festival day among the Jews, numbers of them were gathered from various countries of Asia, Africa, and Europe, in the city of Jerusalem. In that city dwelt a body of priests divinely called, as its inhabitants believed, to this office, members of a priestly family. There were also authorised doctors and interpreters of the law, whose words were received by the great mass of the people as oracles. On the day of Pentecost, says the writer of the Acts, a great body of the inhabitants of the city, and of the strangers from other lands, were drawn to a place near the temple, because they were told that a set of men, not priests, not

doctors of the law, but inhabitants of the most despised part of Palestine, themselves of the lowest caste, Galilean fishermen, were speaking in different tongues the wonderful works of God. This power the Scripture declares was given them from on high. The Spirit of God had descended upon them; they spake with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. To the body thus endued it is said a multitude joined themselves. They were regarded with more and more jealousy by the priests and doctors of the Jews. But they spread themselves through Palestine; they went into other lands. Everywhere, they declared that they came in the power of the Spirit, who had thus broken down the barriers of language and race; everywhere they said that this Spirit would be given to those who believed their message.

Are we to conclude from this story that the Christian faith broke loose from the Jewish faith, as Buddhism broke loose from Brahminism; that in each case there was a vehement reaction against caste narrowness and local boundaries; that in each case this reaction was associated with the recognition of a spirit dwelling in man? There may be much plausibility in such a notion; for many reasons it would commend itself to certain modern philosophers. Only they would say, 'In order to make out this resemblance, it is necessary to divest the scriptural story of its halo of mystery and marvel. Take it as it stands, and all you learn from it is, that on a certain occasion a strange phenomenon was seen, unlike any that had previously

occurred, or was to occur again; at variance with the constitution of man and the dealings of his Creator. In that form it offers only a seeming analogy to the Buddhist doctrine; seeing that the latter assumes the presence of a divine and diffusive spirit to be the proper characteristic of humanity, at least in its noblest state, and that on this ground it oversets the caste principle—not for a particular emergency, but altogether. If, however, you are inclined to admit that this is the confused narrative of a remarkable epoch in Jewish history (and, indeed, in the world's history) when there was awakened in the nation, or in a part of it, the consciousness, previously slumbering, of a capacity in men generally for that knowledge which had been confined to the priests—a narrative surrounded, as all Hebrew narratives are, with a divine machinery—we will admit that you have established your case.'

I submit that one part of this statement is quite incorrect. If I read the story as it stands, I shall not merely be told that a certain event happened at a certain time and in a certain place; I shall be told that this event was the fulfilment of a promise made to the fathers of the Jewish nation; I shall be told that it was intended for those of that generation, and for their children. These assertions, it will be remembered, are very prominent in the discourse which the writer of the Acts of the Apostles attributes to St. Peter. One therefore who believes his statement cannot look upon this descent of the Spirit, with all that was implied in

the circumstances of it, as violating the laws of the human constitution, as an exception in the plan of the Creator. He must look upon it as expounding that constitution, as carrying out that plan. But on what grounds, it will be asked, can it be alleged that the principles set forth in the Jewish scriptures and the Jewish economy were asserted and realised by a transaction which seems to destroy the exclusive hierarchy, ultimately the exclusive national limitation, which lie at the root of them? The answer to this question will, I believe, show that the affinities of Christianity with Buddhism are much closer and more extensive than they would be on the hypothesis of the former being a rebellion against Judaism; on the other hand, will explain wherein the difference between them consists, and what that 'miraculous halo' which is imputed to the Scripture narrative, has to do with it.

We turn to the earliest of the Jewish records, and we find it declared that God made man in His own image, and gave him dominion over all the other creatures He had formed. Before a word has been said about the difference of one people from another, here is a broad fundamental assertion respecting man as man. Perhaps you will say, 'Yes; but this is set at nought by one which immediately follows it; the fall of Adam is the real, though the creation of man may be the nominal, beginning of the history.' As we are examining these records to find what they actually affirm, I consider the simplest, nay, the only honest method is to take them as beginning where they seem to begin, not

to assume a starting-point of our own. It will then be seen more clearly whether they have a connection with each other, or are only a collection of Sibylline leaves; whereas, if we insist that the Divine drama opens at a certain chapter, and that all which precedes is prologue, we do not *find* the connection, but make it. The arrangements of divines may demand such violence upon the text; but I do not think it is ever justified by the conscience of simple and devout Christians. I believe they would be shocked to the last degree if you insisted in plain language upon their believing that the constitution of God was nullified, destroyed, or even at all affected, by the evil acts of man. Undoubtedly, there is the fullest, most immediate recognition of the fact that evil entered into the world. There is no tampering with experience, no attempt to represent the universe as something else than it is, in order to make it accord with the account of its origin. There is no hint of a golden age, during which sin and death were not upon the earth. We are told that the very first man forgot that he was made in the image of God; yielded to the temptation of an inferior creature; came under death. He denied the law after which he was created. And each of his descendants is shown to have the same propensity to obey that which he was meant to rule; to disbelieve in Him whom he was meant to obey. But neither the first man nor any of his successors could make this degradation and disobedience anything else than an anomaly and a contradiction. The worst man in Scripture

is never represented as evil in any other sense than because he fights against the law under which he exists, and of which his very transgression is the continual witness. And therefore in the Bible God is ever represented as addressing Himself to the creature whom He had formed, as awakening in him by His voice a consciousness of his right condition.

He is represented as speaking thus to Adam when he was hiding himself from His presence; as speaking thus to Cain when he was meditating his crime, and when he had committed it. In each case it is assumed that the creature addressed stood in a direct relation to the Creator, however he might be denying it, and determining to shut himself out from it. And I need scarcely remind you, that he is treated, after the fall as well as before it, as still intended to have dominion over the earth and the animals upon it. The ground is cursed for his sake: in the sweat of his brow he must till it; but he does till it—he does subdue it. He is continually disposed to treat it as his master, but he is compelled to act as if it were his slave—compelled at the same time to remember that its power of producing nourishment for him depends not upon himself, but upon an Unseen Will, which he is ever inclined to lose sight of. The punishment of the race when lust and violence had spread over it, the preservation of it in a family, the blessing under which the sons of Noah go forth to replenish the earth and to subdue it, the confusion of their purpose of dwelling together in one plain when they

were meant to people the earth, bear witness to the same principle. Man, the race of Man, is treated as formed in the image of God, as intended for rule over the creatures.

Now if this be the case with respect to the records of the period preceding the Call of Abraham, those which follow can only be understood on the same principle. The history of the chosen people does not record an outrage upon mankind for the sake of one portion of it; it is the history of men taken out of darkness into the light, made conscious of their own state, as created in the image of God and meant to have dominion over the earth. A Mesopotamian shepherd is called the friend of God —in him all the families of the earth are to be blessed. Out of his family grows a nation. It is a witness to all nations against the separate idolatrous worship which is dividing them. Its members are taught to believe that God Himself is their King—the Unseen God of all the earth. They are not in some unnatural condition because they are taken under His government; their lives are simple, natural, orderly, in proportion as they remember it; confused and irregular when they forget it. As the history of the nation goes on, there are continually new discoveries of evil tendencies, of an evil nature, in the members of it. They are not different from the rest of the world; they are equally idolatrous, equally selfish, equally corrupt. Where then is their advantage? The Lord of All has revealed Himself to them; He has taken them into covenant; they may trust Him. In trusting Him

they rise above these selfish and idolatrous tendencies—they become truly men. The Jewish Prophet, when he is most overwhelmed with his own evil and with the evil of his nation, obtains most apprehension of the truth that God will exhibit His perfect Image to men, in a Man, and will so confound all the images they have made. Except such an Image were really presented to them in a Man—except it were really shown to be true that Man was made in the Image of God, and had dominion over the creatures, and that Death and Evil were not his masters, the visions of Jewish seers were delusions. But St. Peter, when he spoke to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, was firmly assured that a Man had appeared in the world who was the perfect Image of the Unseen God. He believed that this Person had been declared in the waters of baptism to be the Son of God; that the Spirit of God had descended upon Him; that in the strength of that Spirit he had exercised dominion over the powers of nature, over man's spiritual enemies; had passed through death, had ascended to the right hand of His Father. That He should give His Spirit to men, to make them the sons of God in Him; to restore them to God's Image; to give them power over the earth; to constitute them the masters, and not the subjects of visible things; —this seemed to him the right and reasonable fulfilment of express promises which were contained in the Jewish Scriptures, and of all their meaning.

With equal certainty he said, that the promise would be to them and to their children. He was

sure that the Spirit of God had taken possession of the powers, and energies, and speech of men. He was sure that in yielding to that Spirit he was obeying no strange, unnatural impulse, but was submitting to his proper guide and teacher, to the Author of all order, and peace, and unity. More than this, perhaps, he may not have perceived. To see in this gift the witness for a great human fellowship, to see all that it implied respecting man's creation and his redemption was perhaps reserved, more perfectly, for another Apostle. Through intense personal humiliation and suffering did the Apostle Paul learn that Christ by His death, and resurrection, and ascension, had justified man before God; that the Spirit of God was given, not only as the fulfilment of all promises which had been made to the fathers of the Jewish nation, but as the fulfilment of the original law of his creation, when He made all things in Christ Jesus, with the intent of finally gathering them all together in Him. In his Epistles we find him brought into contact with men of different habits, philosophies, and educations. The old mythologies had prepared them very readily to recognise an inspiration from God. The sages very readily recognised the worth of the individual soul in man; but the inspiration which the first admitted was sudden and casual, the honour which the other paid to the soul was solitary, exclusive, self-exalting. He spoke of a Spirit of God as given to dwell continually in man; to be the source in him of all knowledge, faith, love; the strength for all ordinary toils, the

comforter in all sorrows, the power of exploring the unseen and the future. He spoke of this Spirit as calling forth a spirit in man, in the individual man, which lifts him above himself, which he cannot call his own, which belongs to him as the child of God, the member of a universal family—"the spirit of MAN which is in him."

That profound feeling of reverence for the human spirit, then, which we have discovered in the Buddhist, his belief in the mighty capacities of this spirit, his determination to recognise these capacities as belonging to the race, not to some one section or class of it, his assurance that the spirit in man cannot be circumscribed by the limits of time or space, or by the measures and conditions of individual feeling and consciousness, his conviction that this human spirit must, in some mysterious manner be divine, has its full justification in Christianity. And every subordinate idea which has grown out of these in the mind of the Buddhist has that which answers to it in the Gospel. He believes that it is the privilege of the divine man to contemplate the Divinity in His purity. The highest view which St. Paul takes of the privileges of Christian men, in consequence of the gift which had been bestowed upon them, is that they might know God; his most earnest prayer, that they might increase in this knowledge. The Buddhist believes that, in order to the attainment of such knowledge, the mind must be separated from outward, sensual things. Sanctification, the deliverance of the heart and

mind from earthly temporal influences, that they may enter into the enjoyment of that which is unseen and eternal, is the very work which the writers of the New Testament, with one accord, attribute to the Holy Spirit who had been given them. The Buddhist however, feeling that he must, in some way, study the universe, and account for the facts which he observes in it, was led to perceive the necessity of a power which originates or begets, a capacity which receives, a bond which unites them. The Scriptures, too, suppose a power which creates, a power in the creature which receives; the Scriptures contemplate the union and coworking of these powers as the condition of health in all that exists; they show how all destruction in the human voluntary creature has come from his will not yielding itself to the divine, creating, inspiring Will; how all restoration comes from their being again brought into accordance. They speak of the deepest ground of all things being the awful union of the Father with the Son in the Spirit.

Again, we heard of holy men appearing as benefactors of different portions of the globe; their footsteps traced upon earth, yet their home seeming to be somewhere else. What they are is known chiefly by what they have done; their acts are palpable; a mystery hangs about themselves. They are called Buddhas; though they appear in places and times far apart, the same wisdom, the same power dwells in them all; they must be the wisdom and power of Buddha; they can belong to

no other. Even thus do Christians speak of those who in far-off ages, in various latitudes, have shed light into the hearts of men, have cheered the poor in the midst of their sore trials with help for the present, hope for the future, have restrained triumphant evil, and laboured that righteousness and truth might flourish. These we hold to be all partakers of the self-same Spirit; in their words and acts they manifest its presence; care not to be great in themselves, but do homage to a mysterious greatness, from which all that seems such in themselves is derived; show that they have their work on earth, their citizenship in the heavens. Once more, the Buddhist affirms that there must be some person, and that a human person, in whom the perfect wisdom resides. He need not in his earthly appearance be glorious; he may wear the form of a child; but the Power must be within, and must so reveal itself that men shall see the Divine Priest is there. Even thus it is the clearest, most invariable proclamation in the Gospel, that each man, in his best, purest estate, does but utter some portion of the Divine Mind, does but exhibit some one partial image of the Divine Character; that there is one perfect Utterance of that voice, one perfect image of that substance, one in whom the Fullness pleased to dwell, one who humbled Himself to the cradle of Bethlehem, to the Cross of Calvary; who in that cradle, and on that Cross, showed forth the Divine glory: and who, because He humbled Himself, has been exalted to be the High Priest of our race for ever.

But as we have seen this relation between Buddhism and Christianity coming out before us with increasing brightness, we must, I think, have become also more and more conscious of *some* difference, which, whatever it be, is a deep and radical one. The philosophical objectors told us that if we could separate the story of Pentecost from its 'mythical' accidents, the sound of the rushing mighty wind, the cloven tongues, the notion of a particular endowment bestowed by Jesus Christ at that particular moment on His disciples, we should arrive at an intelligible result, which might throw some light upon Buddhist and other history. I complained of this statement so far as it represents the events of that day as isolated, as inconsistent with principles recognised in the Jewish economy, as importing that the in-dwelling of a Spirit in man is not implied in his original constitution. Subject to these remarks, I now admit that they are right in looking upon these miraculous circumstances as indicative of the difference between the Scriptural and the Buddhist conception of the spiritual endowments of human creatures. The Buddhist starts from the human ground; assumes the existence or possibility of certain qualities and attributes of a divine nature in man; supposes the man, in virtue of these, to hold intercourse with the Divinity. The Scripture starts from the divine ground; assumes that man according to his constitution is nothing but an image; denies that he can originate anything; sets forth a revelation of his Creator to him as the foundation of his knowledge—of his life; represents all

faculties, powers, energies of the creature as gifts of the Creator. Upon this difference every other depends. If the first view be the right one, there can, of course, be no divine manifestation, for there is nothing to manifest. The Creator does not witness to men by visible signs that He is the Author of these gifts, for He is not the Author of them, or He does not design to make them know that He is. If the other view be true, these (so-called) miracles, these exercises of power, these signs of a Presence, are precisely the methods which commend themselves to the conscience and reason of mankind as the most fitted—I had nearly said as the only possible—witnesses of a truth, which, when it has been once testified of in this way, can hereafter be held as certain and abiding, though there be no startling signs of it at all.

Now, as Buddhism and Christianity are the respective exemplifications of these two methods, it may be well to consider the practical results of each. You will see, I trust, my object. I do not desire to make out a charge against Buddhism on the ground of its moral deficiencies; but, I want to ascertain how far these deficiencies are or are not owing to this characteristical feature of it, that more than any other system the world has ever seen, it makes the belief of a Divine power working in man its ground, and ascends from that ground to any apprehension it may entertain respecting the Divinity Himself.

I. One leading contrast offers itself instantly to our notice. The Buddhist believes that a Divine

wisdom and power dwells, or may dwell, in human beings, and that its dwelling constitutes them, heroic spirits—saintly men. The New Testament begins with teaching us *what* kind of Spirit this must be; what manner of Being He is from whom this Spirit proceeds; what must be the manner of His working in creatures who submit to His government. It speaks of the Spirit of Him who had declared Himself for ages to the Jews as the God of Truth and Righteousness; it speaks of the Spirit of Him who gave His Son for men. It sets forth the character of this Spirit by His life, in whom it is said to have dwelt without measure. If holiness was more characteristic of Him than power, the Spirit of holiness is the name by which we are taught to express it most uniformly and perfectly. If meekness, humility, gentleness, were the essential qualities of His life, the Spirit is known as the Spirit of meekness, humility, gentleness: these are declared to be the fruits of its operations. If His whole life was an act of self-sacrifice, His Spirit is set forth as the power whereby man is able to offer himself a sacrifice. If Love was the source and end of His sacrifice, it is the Spirit of Love which he promises to those who obey Him. Not that these assertions in the least interfere with the other equally prominent one, that He is the Spirit of Truth and Knowledge; that all powers and exercises of mind, and their direction are from Him. No one brings out that assertion more clearly than St. Paul; but he winds up the enumeration of gifts and powers in these words: "And yet I show you a more excel-

lent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." Love is in his teaching, as in his life, the highest manifestation of the presence of the Spirit, because God, from whom it proceeds, is Love.

II. All this difference, you see, is grounded upon the difference between the naked idea of a Spirit dwelling in man and identical with himself, and the idea of Him as given to men by the Eternal God through His Son. Look now at the difference as to another point, the estimate of human creatures. To the Buddhist those whom he believes thus endowed necessarily become gods; they can be nothing else. And thus, he who starts with the rejection of an hereditary priesthood as an intolerable yoke, because men, as men, have the capacity of seeing God and worshipping Him, ends by becoming the poor servant and tool of a priesthood. All who can exhibit the intellectual power which he feels is of right his, and yet which he is conscious that he does not actually possess, must be objects of his obedience and his worship. He has no standard with which he can compare what they are and what they do; he is sure that there must be some who enjoy intercourse with the unseen world; they cannot tell him what the intercourse means, what the result of it is, how he can be the better for it. They seem to say, some of them actually say, and wish him to understand that at all events they are marking out a *ne plus ultra* to *his* inquiries, "Beyond us lies a void of Nothingness." Into that void the

listening disciple has no temptation to enter. What can he do but accept these finite temporary priests as the best substitutes for the Infinite which he longs for and yet shrinks from? They at least keep alive the appetite, they save him from utter despair. Such is the condition of those who can only contemplate the Spirit which they feel is meant for man as in man. The Christian is taught to think of this Spirit as *in* God, as coming forth from Him. He is taught that he may ask God continually for the quickening and renewing of it in himself, and in all the family to which he belongs. He is told that when the Comforter comes He shall convince the world of Sin, of Righteousness, of Judgment; that He shall not become identical with the man himself; but shall show him his evil; shall raise him out of that evil into a Righteousness which is above him, which is in one who is gone to the Father; shall give him the continual assurance of a final separation between that which is true and that which is false.

III. Thus the promise of the Spirit is the promise to a man of a power to overlook his own mind, to judge its acts and movements, to know what in it requires to be cut off, what is wrought in God. Every human heart is to be the subject of it; no creature belonging to the race for which Christ died, is meant to be defrauded of this mighty illumination. But no one who receives it can pretend to be thereby exalted above his fellows; his knowledge is the knowledge of his own individual abasement; of that glory which he shares with his kind in

Christ. And therefore the Scripture, in strict conformity with this idea, represents all intellectual gifts as bestowed, not to raise one man above another, but simply that men may be enabled to serve each other. The highest of all is the servant of all. He who holds his gifts under this condition, and confesses his unfitness for the use of them, is a fellow-worker with the Divine Spirit. He is doing that which he was sent here to do. He who uses them for any other end, who holds them on any other condition, practically disowns the blessing and its Author. The priest and the prophet come under this rule. They especially are to look upon themselves as called by Him who is the deliverer of men out of their confusion and darkness, to an office under Him, as endowed with powers by Him to fulfil this office. So far as the priest or the prophet looks upon all the ability he possesses as a gift, the object of which is determined by the character of the giver, and the nature of *His* work, so far he is a true priest and true prophet; assuming his ability as his property, he becomes a false priest, a false prophet; in the language of Scripture, a wolf and not a shepherd, a destroyer of men, not their deliverer.

IV. But the conception of the Lama supplies us with the most perfect illustration of the difference I am endeavouring to point out. In him is gathered up that spirit of humanity which the Buddhist worships, and from which he deduces his divinity. The Christian affirms that He in whom the priesthood of the universe rests is the eternal Son of

God, that He took human nature, united it to God, endued it with that Spirit which dwelt without measure in Himself. He, they declare, is the Head of many members, through each of which, so long as it abides in Him, the same life-blood is transmitted. The former notion, grounded upon a true and deep feeling that there must be a centre or that there can be no fellowship, assumes the centre anywhere—in a child or old man—and demands implicit faith that there all intelligence rests. The other, starting from the fact that humanity has a centre above itself, declares how He who claimed to be this centre, in poverty, weakness, contempt made good his title, by proving that He could deliver the spirit of man out of its fetters, that in owning Him to be its Lord it attained the freedom it was sighing for. The one notion glorifying the intellect and spirit of man, insists upon their doing homage to the meanest object which they create for themselves to worship; the other, humbling the intellect and spirit of man before one who has established his right to be their master, offers them an expansion and exaltation of which the knowledge and love of an absolute and perfect Being are the only limits.

V. Thus the society of the Buddhist has no bond except the existence of something mysterious *in* the creatures who belong to it: feeling this to be insufficient, he invents an external supremacy, and endues it with attributes which he knows it does not possess; he makes a lie, and the lie avails him nothing, for the three hundred millions which

own it compose only a mass of atoms without any principle of cohesion, though they are ever seeking one. The Christian Ecclesia confesses by its very name that its existence has its ground in the call of an Almighty Being; that it stands only by His will; that it is distinguished from a divided world to be a witness of that true glory which man possesses when he looks upward, not downwards, to a Master, not to himself; that, having such a call and being such a witness, it is baptised with a Spirit of power, and truth, and love, who by it would bring all men into the divine fellowship which embraces all peoples, tongues, kindreds—from which no one can, except by an act of self-will, be excluded.

VI. I might perhaps leave the comparison here drawn to work its way upon the consciences and hearts of all who love truth and freedom and their kind, in deed more than in word. But the subject is so transcendantly important at this time, that I must present it still in one or two other lights. The first is this. Buddhism, you see, necessarily excludes Mahometanism and Hindooism. It is the direct contradiction of the former; Mahometanism basing the universe upon the distinctness and absoluteness of God. Its antipathy to the second is the great fact of its history, the explanation of its existence. It denies the reality of that distinction which is involved in the doctrine of the twice-born man, as opposed to the ordinary man. And now we find it cannot sustain those pretensions to spirituality, on account of which it is at war with the

unspiritual Mahometan, or that pretension to humanity and freedom from priestcraft, on account of which it is at war with the exclusive Brahmin. It sets their ideas at nought; it utterly fails in realising its own. But we have been led to think that ideas which have exercised such a sway over multitudes of human beings, from generation to generation, must be realised in some way. Our philosophers have taught us to pay this homage to the thoughts of our fellow-men; we bless them for the lesson; we are ashamed of not having learnt it sooner, of not having rather imparted it to them. I beseech you seriously to ponder this question. How *may* these ideas be realised? How may they be reconciled? And if you should, after much thinking, find that this ancient Revelation which you were going to cast aside as one of the false and worn-out systems of the world, supplies that realisation and reconciliation—supplies them because it is a revelation—on that ground and no other—then be sure that if you do cast it aside, or wish to prove it something else than revelation, the reason is not that you care for what is expansive and comprehensive, that you hate what is formal and narrow; *this* is not any longer the ground of your opposition. Will you then with great earnestness ask yourselves what it is?

VII. Perhaps, however, we have been speaking only of a verbal reconciliation; you want one which shall be practical; one which may bear to be tried on a great scale. Let us see, then, whether the case of China, a country which you will allow to be

practical at least in its aim, to offer quite sufficient room for a large experiment, may not supply what you require. If you did hear of a people which had had for ages the strongest conviction that the authority of the Father was the one foundation of society, but had never been able to connect this conviction with the acknowledgment of anything mysterious and divine; of a society which for ages had not been able to prevent a certain body of its subjects from dreaming that there is a mysterious and divine Word or Reason speaking to the wise man, out of which dream, however, no fruits had proceeded but impostures and delusions; if you were told, that into the heart of this society Buddhism had come, with its strange testimony of a Spirit in the human race, the ordinary manifestations of which are seen in very ignorant priests, its perfect manifestation often in an infant: if you heard that these doctrines had never been able to combine, and yet that no one could succeed in banishing the other from an empire in which order and unity are prized as the highest blessings of all, nay, that experience had proved to reluctant sages, that none of these elements of discord could safely be extinguished, that each was in some strange way needful to the permanence of that which it seemed to undermine:— and if after this you heard of a faith which assumed that the ground of all things and all men is a Father; that He has spoken and does speak by his Filial Word to the hearts and spirits of men, so making them wise, and separating them from what is base and vain; that this Filial Word has been

made flesh and dwelt among men, and has given them power to become sons of God; and that through Him a Spirit is given to dwell with men, to raise up a new spirit in them, to unite them to each other, to make them living portions of a living body; that men are actually admitted by a simple rite into a Name expressive of their adoption by the Father, their separation by the Word, their inspiration by the Spirit; that in this Name stood a universal fellowship, which upheld the authority of earthly fathers upon the ground of the divine relation, which asserted the distinction of wise and foolish, good and evil men, upon the ground of their following or disobeying the monitions of that filial teacher, from whom all right human instructors derived the power whereby they were able to make good and useful scholars, which maintained the intercourse and communion of human beings upon the ground of their obedience to the Spirit of order and harmony; if, I say, these two sets of facts were presented to you side by side, would not you feel there was some strange adaptation in the one to the other; that there was in the last the secret principle and power for which it was evident from the former that China had through centuries been asking in vain?

VIII. But why do I speak thus? Does it not sound like the idlest of all visions to talk of our converting Buddhists, when, judging from various indications, they are far more likely to convert us? I have not disguised from you the Buddhist side of Christianity; I have rejoiced to set it forth, as I

rejoiced to set forth the Mahometan and Hindoo sides of it. But, as we saw that either of these elements might in any age become the predominant, almost the exclusive one, it is needful that we should consider well how this third doctrine may in former days have crushed, may crush in our own, every other. Assuredly, there are distinct traces of prevalent triumphant Buddhism in the Christian Church of periods gone by. The history of Orders rising up to reform society, to rebuke organised priesthoods for their self-indulgence, coldness, exclusiveness, to assert the rights of the poor, to maintain that every member of Christ's flock has a calling to benefit the rest; beginning thus nobly, and then sinking into more intolerable despots than those against whom they protested—self-exalted in their gifts, their knowledge, their ignorance, their poverty;—deceiving, and being deceived; drawing all reverence to themselves on the score of their humility, holding down the poor in slavery, whom they came to deliver; this history contains one class of such phenomena. In the history of Mysticism and Quietism, telling how men beginning to seek God with earnest hearts, to denounce the idolatrous notions others had formed of Him, to retire into the secret chamber that there might be no hindrance from outward things to the clearness of the vision, to mortify their flesh that it might not stand in their way, went on till their hearts grew puffed up and proud, till they began to boast of wonderful discoveries vouchsafed to them alone, till they became the subjects of all nervous impres-

sions, fantasies, disorders, more sensual than those whom they charged with being so; how at last they gazed on vacancy, and felt, if they had not honesty to say, 'The vision is gone, we see nothing:' here we find Christian Buddhism in another manifestation. And the lessons which these two records supply are not obsolete; either of these temptations may assault any of us again; in some form is perhaps assaulting all of us.

IX. But chiefly should we be careful to note what common principle it was which in each of these cases turned so much seeming truth into a curse; for it is of that we have need to beware in whatever dress it may come, or if our especial work should be to encounter it in its nakedness. Unquestionably the member of the order and the solitary mystic alike yielded to the feeling, 'It is this power in me, this faculty of government, this faculty of vision, which is the great thing of all. How glorious to belong to this great society, for which I am ready to live and die; how glorious to have this capacity of conversing with the Infinite, for the sake of which I have cheerfully resigned all things!' Who could think that the deadliest poison was lurking in such words as these; that there could be the essence of all pride in such self-sacrifice? But what if men should say boldly, 'It is this power in me which is really the great power of all; it is this eye in me which creates the object it seems to behold. I will acknowledge nothing else, worship nothing else.' What if this should be the language which men lisped a few years ago,

and now begin to speak distinctly? Then surely there will gradually appear most of the other signs which we have traced in Buddhism, and many which could not appear in it, or in any heathen system. First, the formation of an intellectual priesthood more utterly without the sense of a vocation, more simply glorying in its powers, therefore more intolerant, exclusive, oppressive, than any other with which this earth has ever been cursed. Next, the consciousness in that exclusive priesthood of a want of sympathy with actual men, notwithstanding their boast of humanity in the abstract; therefore an attempt to supply this want, as it always has been supplied, by devices to meet the taste of the vulgar, by prodigies, portents, sorceries; physical mysteries being called in as a compensation for the absence of divine mysteries; science being degraded into an instrument of basest imposture. Finally, intellectual worship after giving birth to all forms of empiricism, ending at last in the elevation of some merely brute power to the throne of the universe; a power which will prove by its triumph, that if intellect, freedom, humanity, have no better protectors than themselves, they must be trampled down; will prove, as we are well assured, by its ultimate discomfiture, that they have another Protector, Him from whom all good and perfect gifts have come.

X. But it will avail little to call up such visions as these, however certain we may feel from the testimony of history that they will one day show themselves to be realities, if they lead us only to

the denunciation of others, to a dread of the words which *they* speak, or of the acts which *they* do. Oftentimes I fear such denunciations and such dread conceal a very shallow faith in ourselves; oftentimes they indicate that we are sadly beset with that pride in our own intellectual powers which we attribute to others. Ourselves we need to suspect; our own half belief in the truths of which we talk most loudly; our own readiness to substitute the conclusions of our understandings for the divine teaching. If we heartily confess these sins and repent of them we shall not magnify the operations of the divine Spirit less because some seem to contemplate them exclusively; we shall not be betrayed into the vulgar and deceitful policy of underrating the reason and faculties of men, because some seem to overvalue them; we shall not fancy that we show great dexterity and piety when we force a feeling in one direction, because its natural growth seems to be in another.

Rather, we shall regard all the tendencies of particular periods with reverence as indications of God's will, however perverted by man's ignorance and selfishness. When we meet with a fanatical exaltation of spiritual emotions, excitements, ecstacies, we shall be most anxious to assert the reality and universality of spiritual communications; to place them on their deepest ground, to show how utterly dreary man's condition would be without them. When we see a fanatical exaltation of human faculties, then most shall we be eager to assert their worth and sacredness; to vindicate them from all

aspersions grounded upon the imperfections which attach to them in this world; to maintain that he who refuses them the noblest cultivation despises and blasphemes the Author of them. And that the truths proclaimed by raving Sects and by Idolaters of the Intellect may both be preserved, we shall bring them into fellowship. The communication of the divine Spirit we shall believe to be the only means whereby the Reason, the Heart, the Understanding, are enabled to perform their rightful functions, to be vigorous, calm, pure, in harmony with the mind of the Creator, and with all that is truly human. Holding all power as a trust, every office as a stewardship, believing that the divine Spirit itself who dwells with us is the greatest trust, the most awful stewardship, we shall feel more the glory of our race because we feel more our own insignificance; shall be more really men, because we walk more humbly with our God.

## PART II.—LECTURE IV.

*The early preaching of the Gospel—how it affected Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Goths. Form of this preaching. Resistance from the doctrine of an Evil Principle. Mahometan protest against it, and for the sacredness of the outward world. Hindoo protest on behalf of a divine kingdom. Buddhist protest for an actual Indwelling Spirit. Modern infidel protest for humanity. Christianity established by all. Conclusion.*

IN former Lectures I have considered the relation in which Christianity stands to the existing religious systems of the world, to Mahometanism, Hindooism, Buddhism. In this, the last Lecture of the course, I ought, according to the plan which I laid down for myself, to consider in what relation it stands to those which I called the defunct systems —those of ancient Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and the Gothic world. But it will strike you at once that this subject has, in a great measure, been anticipated.

I could not allude to the facts which justified my use of the word *defunct*, in reference to these religions, without indicating the kind of influence which Christianity had exercised over them. I was obliged to tell you that the worship of the god of Light in Greece, the state religion of Rome, the worship of Odin amongst the Goths, had given way before the preaching of the Crucified Son of God. I could not omit to notice the way in which

the Gospel had established itself in the Greek cities of Egypt, or the influence it had received from the culture previously existing in them, or the resistance it had met with in the country districts where the old Egyptian doctrine had its strongest hold. I could not but speak of that revival of the Persian faith, which took place in the second century of the Christian era, of the obstruction which that faith offered to the Gospel, of its remarkable re-action upon some of the teachers of the Gospel. I should have no excuse for travelling again over this ground, though the observation we took of it was so rapid and superficial, were it not that the facts to which I have just alluded, taken in connection with those which have engaged our attention already, suggest painful doubts to the mind, doubts closely related to those which it has been the object of the whole course to examine.

The aspect of Christianity in the first ages, notwithstanding the exceptions which I have noticed, is that of a youthful, growing, victorious doctrine; its roots laid in the depths; its branches spreading over the earth, and reaching to heaven. But then came Mahometanism, utterly exterminating that Persian doctrine with which the Christian teachers had so unsuccessfully fought; bringing Egypt, great part of Asia, and a section of Europe, under its yoke. When we studied the history of this faith, we learnt that it had conquered much from the Gospel, and had scarcely, through twelve centuries, yielded to any permanent impression from it. The latter assertion is almost as true of Hindooism, in

spite of the establishment of a Christian empire in the East. Buddhism still holds a third of the globe in almost undisturbed possession. Now a person comparing these two sets of facts will be very likely to say, 'Supposing your answers to the philosophical objectors, who maintain that Christianity is a decaying, nearly obsolete, creed be ever so relevant and strong, yet what are they when weighed against this startling confirmation of their statements? Must not that faith have had a fitness for other ages, an unfitness for ours, which during six centuries accomplished so much, which now seems to be accomplishing almost nothing; which could then encounter the wisdom and power of those nations that we still recognise as having been the wisest and mightiest in the world, which now fails in a conflict with the ignorant and incoherent worshippers of Buddha. And if you escape by pleading that the human professors of this doctrine are less sincere and energetic than they were, what is this but saying that it depends on human energy; that it is, in fact, a human system, strong whilst those who hold it are strong—sure to wither when their zeal withers?' Such an objection as this cannot be evaded. In considering it, I shall be led to examine the different steps we have taken, beginning with the question, How did Christianity address itself to the systems with which, in its infancy, it came into collision?

I am forced to use the word *Christianity;* for many purposes it is a convenient one. But I must remind you, that it was not a word which was fami-

liar to the Apostles, or to those who succeeded them in the first ages. We are not told that they went forth preaching Christianity. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles says that they preached the "Kingdom of God," or "the Gospel of God," or "Christ," or "the Gospel of Christ." To expound these words fully, would be to expound the New Testament. But this meaning lies upon the surface of them: the Apostles came witnessing of a Lord and King; the Lord and King of men. The proclamation of the Crucified Man, as the Son of God, was their Gospel, or good tidings. In that character men were invited to receive Him. The Apostles believed their own words; they could therefore trust God to prove them true. If this man were the King of the World, strange and ridiculous as the proposition might sound in the ears of Jews or Heathens, He would be shown to be such by one means or other. Some of the Apostles knew nothing of the previous feelings and discipline of the nations; some, as the Apostle Paul, might have meditated on that subject, and have conversed much with men of different opinions. But all alike met the people among whom they came, not with arguments to prove this opinion true, or that false, but with the announcement of a Person who had a right to men's obedience, and whom it was good that they should obey.

I. St. Paul at Athens encountered Epicureans and Stoics; he disputed with them in the market-place. When we are made acquainted with his words, we find they were of this kind, "Whom

ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." 'Your poets have said, that we are the offspring of God; it is true; therefore do not make Him after the likeness of things you see. He is not far from any of us; for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. He has appointed a day in the which He will judge the world by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.' This language, you see, assumed that the Athenians were in search of God; that they were ignorantly worshipping Him; that they had a sense of His being a father; that they wanted some one living, human image of Him, to supplant those images of Him which they had made for themselves. In Athens itself the words were little heeded; men there were busy seeking for some new thing to talk of; they were occupied with schemes of the universe; of realities they had lost the perception. But the teaching was adapted to all that was sound and true in the Greek mind; it met whatever wants that mind was conscious of. The Greek asked for one who should exhibit humanity in its perfection; he was told of a Son of Man. He felt that whoever did so exhibit Humanity must be divine. The Son of Man was declared to be the Son of God. He had dreamed of one from whom the highest glory man could conceive must have proceeded. He was told of a Father. He had thought of a divine Presence in every tree and flower. He heard of a Presence nearer still to himself. He was not told that he must cease to

believe in powers ruling in the Sun or Moon, or over any portion of the earth. The Apostles had no commission to declare there might not be such Powers, or whether they had actual personality: they were not to deny the existence of kingly men upon the earth, or of angels or saints in the unseen world; only they were to say, This Man is the King of kings, the Lord of lords. Of his fulness must they all have received who are anything, or ever were anything, here or elsewhere; their graces can only be a reflection from His grace. They were to say, He is nearer to you—more directly related to you than all these can be; for He has taken the nature of all, and borne the sorrows and sins of all: in Him there is nothing partial, nothing imperfect; no feebleness of sympathy in any single direction. They were to say farther, If in any of the objects of your reverence there is anything earthly, sensual, evil; anything belonging to human nature in its corruption: then that must be contrary to Him; that must be at war with Him. So far as any creature is endued with such qualities, it is an evil creature; it has the evil spirit; it is not to be worshipped as if it were glorious, but renounced as devilish; as that which would draw you from the true estate into which Christ, by taking your nature, has redeemed you. Therefore the Greek mythology was met at all points by this Gospel. What was actually or possibly good in it, the Revelation of Christ comprehended; what was evil and degraded it wrestled with, by proclaiming the good which it had coun-

terfeited. But this was its charm, The Greek had a world without a centre; the preachers of the Gospel made the centre known to him. What could revolve about it, fell into its proper orbit; what determined to move independently of the centre, was seen to be unnatural and distracted.

II. How the Gospel found its way into the Egyptian heart we are not informed so distinctly. This however we may remember; Our Lord spoke to His disciples in parables; through them he declared the mysteries of the kingdom. The facts of outward nature, the ordinary transactions of man, he recognised as a sacred writing, in which God had expressed part of his meaning, a meaning which he did not will to remain hidden, but which his Son unfolded. That the preachers of the Christian kingdom in Egypt should think much on this method of discovering the divine treasures was inevitable. But the substance of the communication was still the same. The Egyptian was questioning all nature to tell him of the Ammon, the hidden God: the Christian answer was still, "Him declare we unto you."

III. So it fared likewise with the Roman, whose worship had really, as we saw, a different direction from that of the Greek, however at various points they might intersect each other. The clear intellect, the beautiful form, were not in his mind the constituents of Kinghood or Godhead. Order, self-government, the capacity of ruling others, submission of individual will to law, he demanded in the chief man; and qualities corresponding to these

alone seemed to him divine. A faith without an organised harmonious society, was to the Latin a dream. After many struggles his own mighty commonwealth had felt that it could only continue to exist under the guidance of a single head; and that head one uniting military and religious titles; a ruler of armies, an object of adoration. A king, in whom was seen the perfect fulfilment of Law—the surrender of the individual Will to the Higher Will; the entire self-sacrifice; a King who was the centre of a society, the head of many members, was proclaimed by the fishermen of Galilee, by the tent-maker of Tarsus. That announcement met Roman life on all its sides and aspects: adopted its highest maxims; overreached its noblest idea of fellowship; showed that the true society had for its chief, one altogether unlike the emperor; one whom he must crush, or to whom he must bow. And so, by slow degrees, the Roman state-idolatry, like the Greek idolatry of individual forms and persons, perished out of the world.

IV. The Goths, again, heard the same proclamation of a kingdom of God. It did not find them watching the embers of an expiring civilisation, but full of boyish vigour and life and rudeness, eager to break and subdue the earth; possessed by the wildest dreams of powers in earth and sea which wrestled for victory; doing homage to a champion of a strong hand and seeing eye, the leader of their hosts and their prophet. With much joy, though amidst much confusion, these barbarians welcomed the tidings of a Redeemer in whom

men could own at once their Lord and their brother.

A redemption of man, a redemption of all that had been lost or disorderly in creation, was equally assumed in the preaching to Greeks, Romans, and Goths:—It was set forth as an accomplished fact; as laying the only right and reasonable ground-work for human life; as that of which the Church, by its very existence, bore testimony. And it was signified in the word *Redemption*, that the partakers of it were not brought into some novel or unnatural state, but into that for which they were created, that which was implied in their human constitution.

V. If this was the nature of the Christian preaching and its success, we may understand where it was likely to encounter the greatest obstructions. The Persians believed in two rulers of the world, one good, one evil. The great reformer had indeed affirmed that the Lord of Light would prevail at last. He seems to have believed that the Prince of Darkness was a rebel against him; not originally a divider of his throne. But he never quite realised this conviction; he could not entirely deny the outward universe to Ahriman; the Persians generally deemed him to be the creator of it. The two powers were regarded as having each a right over man, his flesh and his external circumstances being especially the property of the dark Spirit. What mighty evidences there seemed to be in favour of this hypothesis! How all history, from its beginning onwards, seemed to vouch for it! What obstinacy in the

old forms of evil; what new floods of it were continually pouring in as from a perennial source! In the third or fourth centuries, when the Roman empire was tottering to its fall, under the weight of its own wickedness, the proofs of Ahriman's sovereignty were surely not less than they had been before. Had the Gospel of Christ permanently altered this state of things? When the Persian conversed with Christians, he found them more ready than others to acknowledge an evil in themselves, more sensitive to its existence in the world. They even seemed to admit its supremacy, and to speak of the higher and purer state which they said Christ had established as a deliverance out of the natural human condition; of His saints as rebelling against the Prince of this World. Such language, often carelessly and ignorantly used, often misunderstood when it was rightly used, may at first have led the Magian to think that the Gospel had not undermined his primitive doctrine—had rather brought new facts in confirmation of it. And yet he will have found Christians ready to live and die for the assertion that Christ was the one only Lord; that all things in heaven and earth and under the earth were subject to Him; that no power of evil could measure itself against Him; that He held an undoubted, undivided authority. The Persian will therefore have felt that, in spite of seeming coincidences, this faith was one with which his could not consist; that he was bound to exterminate the believers in Jesus, if he could not convert them.

We have good evidence that no question was so profoundly agitating to men's minds in the first ages as this. The Magians, as I said, succeeded in re-establishing their old doctrine, and with it the old Persian empire. But the belief in rival powers of good and evil, to the latter of which the origin of all visible things might be ascribed, spread far beyond its limits. It incorporated itself with all the religious and philosophical views of the age; it penetrated deeply into the Church of Christ, was the great characteristic of its most prevalent heresy, and mingled, in different forms and measures, with every other. Of all tests of the reality of Christian humility and faith, the greatest seems to have been the power of practically meeting this temptation, of resisting the conclusion that a perfectly good being could not be the author and ruler of the universe; that man could not really be a holy and redeemed creature; that the material world, at all events, must be given up as an evil thing. Only the simple, childlike trust which said, 'There are many things I cannot explain, but *this* I know, that the Son of God has taken my nature, and made it holy, has walked this earth and made it holy, that He has adopted us into fellowship with Him, and commands us to look upon ourselves as holy, in spite of all the evil that is in us; and commands us to treat every creature as holy, though corruption and death may have set their mark upon it'—only a faith of this kind, surmounting present appearances, and laying hold of a higher truth, waiting calmly for them and it to be reconciled in God's

good time, and meanwhile bracing the heart to those daily duties, which, on the other hypothesis, must have been thrown aside as useless and hopeless, could have hindered any Christian from becoming inwardly, if not professedly, a Manichean. St. Augustine has given us, in his own biography, a striking picture of this conflict. With a Christian mother and a heathen father, brought up in the feeble rhetoric of his time, but full of earnest thoughts which made him long to understand the nature of himself and of God; full also of violent passions seeking for gratification; he eagerly embraced the doctrine of the Manichean teachers, for it seemed at once to explain the problem of the universe, and to justify the indulgences which something within him condemned. He shows us how he was forced from speculations upon things without, to a more awful study of that which was passing in himself; how he learnt to perceive that the evil within him was the resistance of his will to a perfect and holy will; how this discovery did much more than scatter his old notions; how it led him to ask what that pure and Holy Being had been doing on behalf of our race; whether He had offered men the means of knowing Him and being like Him. Then the meaning of Christ's coming dawned upon him; he believed that the perfect and holy Being was manifested in Him; that in Him man might behold his own true and proper state, and rise to it; that in His strength we may cast off evil from us, as an enemy which has no proper right or dominion over us, or over any creature;

that man when he becomes the slave of outward things is evil, not because they are evil, but because he is created to be their master. These truths, which slowly worked themselves out in his mind amidst great discouragements and bitter sorrows, he was asserting under one aspect or another all his life through. Shadows of his old system no doubt often darkened his intellect; when he was tempted to make Christianity a system, they were sure to re-appear. But there were times in his life when he felt more clearly than almost any man ever did, that evil does not belong to the order of the universe, but is its disorder; that every creature seeking to dwell in selfish independence, of necessity embraces that disorder and becomes a part of it; that every creature entering into God's covenant and yielding itself to Him, becomes orderly, reasonable, blessed.

But it required more than the teaching of any man, however wise, to check a belief which was so plausible as this. Though only open heretics affirmed that the world was essentially an evil thing, and originated in an evil Being, from whom Christ came to deliver his disciples—though these statements were generally felt to be blasphemous—yet numbers acted as if they were true. Those who decided to live pure and holy lives, left the world that they might do so. The sphere of human action was regarded by saints as an ungodly one, and those who moved in it and ruled it, showed by their lives that they adopted the opinion. There was no distinct, audible voice, declaring, "The kingdoms of this world are the king-

doms of our God and of His Christ." The belief silently gained ground, that there was no warrant for such an assertion; that the redemption which our Lord had wrought, whatever it might mean, did not mean this.

VI. But soon a voice was heard, speaking these words in the ears both of Persians and Christians: "This earth is the possession of the One Lord, the God of Abraham; He claimed it as His when He called out Abraham, and promised that he and his seed should possess a portion of it. The earth is still His. Those who say He has an equal or rival are liars." This was Mahomet's language. His sword was ready to make it good. The Magian faith, the Persian empire, fell to pieces before it. Of all the Mahometan enterprises this was the most startling, and that by which its other triumphs may be best understood. We complain of Mahometanism for its hard outward character; for the materialism of its acts and its rewards. But see how well suited it was on this very ground to meet precisely that evil tendency to which men's minds had yielded. The denial of God's dominion over the actual world; the notion, that though He might have a reign somewhere else, it was not here; this unbelief was destroying all ordinary morality, all simple trust in a Father, was introducing atheism, or else devil-worship, among those who pretended to worship the Holy God, and utterly to renounce His enemies. No mere spiritualism, if it had been ever so fine and true, could have broken this spell. Palpable proofs were wanted that the kingdoms of

this very earth were subject to an Unseen and Absolute Sovereign. And the Mahometan conquests, though so mighty a testimony against Christians, were not a testimony against the Gospel, but for it; a testimony to one necessary, forgotten portion of it; a proof that, if the Church of Christ forgets its own proper position, God can raise up the strangest instruments to do His work.

I say one portion of the Gospel; for you will remind me that if Mahometanism asserted half the doctrine of the text I quoted just now, "The kingdoms of this earth are God's;" it denied the latter half of it, "and His Christ's." But this remark requires to be explained and qualified by two others. Mahometanism does, indeed, deny the fact on which our Gospel rests, that a man is verily and indeed one with the Lord of all; how that denial has affected the whole system, I have considered in a former Lecture. But if we remember what the doctrine was which Mahometanism subverted, we shall see that it involved a much more direct denial of Christ, of His rule over this universe, and of His relation to God. The disposition to look upon the world as the possession of an evil power, which belonged to the Persian, and to the Christian who had caught his temper, made it impossible even to think of it as connected with Christ. The idea of Christ as a deliverer of man from the power of his Creator, went far deeper than the denial of His essential oneness with the Creator. So far as Mahometanism helped to clear the air of these pollutions, it removed the greatest of all im-

pediments to the recognition of that doctrine which it set at nought. But secondly, in order to understand the effect of a system, and the place it occupies in the scheme of Providence, we should think not only of itself, but also of that which has been called out in opposition to it. The formation of society in modern Europe stands in close relation to the history of Mahometanism. The Christian nations were brought to feel that they were connected with each other, and *what* connected them, by seeing such large portions of the world knit together in the acknowledgment of the Arabian prophet. Then was the feeling distinctly realised, that all government has a Divine basis, that kings must be anointed with oil in the name of Christ, that the different members of the community hold their possessions, offices, powers, ultimately of Him; that they depend in different gradations upon each other; that fealty is due to that which is unseen, reverence to that which is weak. Thus, in short, those institutions, forms, habits of thought established themselves which characterise the middle ages; which may be mischievous when they exclude other principles, more clearly perceived in later times; which have become mixed with corruptions, counterfeits, tyrannies, and confounded with them; but which are essential elements of our social existence at this day, and cannot perish until we perish. Now these embodied the other half of the great truth which St. John's words express: "The kingdoms of this world are the kingdoms of his Christ." Nor should it be forgotten, that while

the Mahometan doctrine has been proved by the evidence of history to be maimed and self-destructive, so long as it stands alone, rejecting the principle of European society; that society was continually in danger of losing its own foundation and stability, and of becoming utterly idolatrous and depraved through forgetfulness of the principle which the Mahometans put forth. The worship of the men who uttered, of the visible symbols which shadowed forth, divine truths, might have effaced those truths, but for the testimony which Islamism was permitted to bear on behalf of them.

VII. But though the Gospel, as it was preached by the Apostles and others who followed them, involved the assertion that the earth was redeemed and claimed as God's possession by Christ, I am far from affirming that this was its only or its most characteristic affirmation. The Old Testament was especially the witness for God's government of the *earth*. The New speaks of the *kingdom of heaven*. John the Baptist said the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Our Lord illustrated its principles in every discourse and every miracle; His Apostles invited men to enter into it; in their Epistles they unfolded its nature to those who had believed the message and sought the privilege. This kingdom they described as one of righteousness, peace, and joy; the eye could not see it, but it was most real. It was a kingdom for the heart and spirit of man, for that which was most properly himself, for that in which dwell all his capacities of sorrow, of sympathy, of trust, of hope, of love. It was called the

kingdom of God because communion with Him is the great blessedness of it. And it is the kingdom of God because men are brought into it that they may see themselves, their fellow-creatures, the whole universe, as He sees them; not partially, or each in reference to a separate centre, as they naturally do. Into this kingdom, our Lord said, men were pressing. Experience of sorrow, a sense of weariness and dissatisfaction with all that was visible, the feeling of a good almost within reach and yet never quite attained; above all, the bitter consciousness of something wrong within, which needed to be purged away, of a hollow which needed to be filled up; these were intimations to men of an unseen treasure which they were intended to possess, which only One mightier than they could enable them to possess. Such thoughts and longings would especially haunt the hearts of poor and suffering people; they would be rarer in men who had outward ease and comfort. But our Lord spoke of a divine power which could awaken in all the desire and capacity for this good; of a birth from above by which their spirits might be made fit for the Kingdom of Heaven; of an inward eye which might be opened to behold it. The Apostles, when they baptised men into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, bade them understand that this power was given them, and that though their bodies dwelt in Corinth or Ephesus, their real home was with Him whom they could love but not see. These were the words which stirred the hearts of the early Christians and

led them to that indifference for outward things, which afterwards blended so easily with the Persian notion that these things were to be despised or regarded as evil in themselves. But the truth was not the less mighty because it was capable of a grievous perversion. The belief in it was the strength in which the Christian confessor lived and died. The invisible world was his dwelling: each day he sought to become more familiar with it, to have every thought and feeling brought into harmony with it; to show forth more of the temper and spirit of it in his converse with his fellow-creatures. While, indeed, he kept his Lord's words and example in recollection, he could not scorn any earthly task, he must look upon all the creatures of God as good; while he remembered for what end Christ had come upon earth, he must deem fellowship with men more blessed than separation from them. Still it was the first gift of his redemption, that he could rise out of this circle of things. And when he saw to what coldness and hardness of heart, to what gross superstitions, those yielded, whose thoughts and aspirations were bounded by what they could see and handle, he could understand in what sense St. Paul blessed God for having delivered the Galatians out of this present evil world. It was an evil world, because men made it so, by renouncing the privilege of men; by living as if they had only senses and were not spiritual beings capable of spiritual enjoyments; as if each could only realise the little portion of the goods of earth which he calls his property, and might not enter upon that

inheritance of true blessedness which all may share together, as all may share the light of the sun together.

If men could so pervert these truths as to forget that the outward world was redeemed to be a part of God's kingdom, and if their inward life suffered terribly from this forgetfulness, it became manifest in the course of ages that they could quite as easily lose sight of that which was specially and emphatically the Christian doctrine while they seemed to admit and prize its material results. Since the active energies of men's minds have been awakened, since we have felt that it is our vocation to subdue the earth, to trade, colonise and conquer, this has become the characteristic temptation of all Christian nations, perhaps I may say, especially the characteristic one of our own; for it lies close to some of our highest virtues, to our business-like habits, our love of action, our impatience of what does not look real and practical.

Englishmen in the last century seem for the most part to have persuaded themselves that man is not a mysterious being; that the Gospel does not address him as such; that its main use is to check disorders which the law cannot entirely redress, to make servants respectful to their masters, to keep the humble classes from interfering with the privileges of their superiors; that the kingdom of heaven is a place where certain rewards are bestowed hereafter for decency of conduct here. Those who refused to act upon these maxims, and earnestly devoted themselves to a spiritual life, fancied, not

unnaturally, that the desires of which they were conscious did not properly belong to human beings; that all men ought to have them, but that in fact scarcely any had them; that the unseen world is for the select few, not for mankind.

But to Englishmen in the eighteenth century, the continent of India revealed itself with its treasures and its wonders. Its material treasures might help to strengthen the worldly appetite which went in search of them; but its wonders, well considered, might surely have supplied the counteraction, might have proved that men everywhere need a kingdom of heaven as well as a kingdom on earth. The Hindoo lives in a world of thought. He is certain that divine knowledge, the knowledge of Brahm, is the highest end of life. He cannot be satisfied till he is united with the Divinity. The divine man, he says, must be a twice-born man, must be raised out of his natural condition, must not lose himself in communion with outward things. Indications of this faith are forced upon the observation of every Englishman in India; he may explain them as he will, but he cannot deny them. Do they not say to him, just perhaps when the associations of his childhood are about to be cast off altogether—'What you used to hear from your nurse and your mother may after all mean something. You were told that you were a twice-born man, a member of Christ, a Child of God, an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. May there not be treasures nearer to you than these Indian treasures, treasures which are yours by the clearest title, and yet which you

have never reduced into possession? If you could impart them to these subjects of ours, might you not do that for them which the best legislation cannot do? Will you not at least ask whether the Hindoo is wrong in thinking that man is made for something else than to buy and sell, to eat, drink, and die; and whether if he is right, there is any escape from his restless self-torture, except in the calm faith that it is our Father's good pleasure to give us that kingdom which the idolater would at the price of any anguish wring from the objects of his worship?'

Here then is a voice coming from the most opposite quarter to that whence the other was brought to us—a voice of the most different kind. Yet it comes as a witness not against but for that which we have been taught to believe, a witness not for but against our indifference to it. So that these two voices compared together, may, I think, help to answer the question we have been examining, whether Christianity be not dependent for its evidence and its success upon the faith of those who promulgate it. There cannot be a truer assertion than that this is the criterion of a human system; there cannot be a more undoubted prophecy than that the Gospel, if it be a human system, must perish, as all systems are perishing. On the other hand, if it were anything more than this, we should expect that the weakness, heartlessness, cowardice, baseness of its advocates would themselves be in some way converted into demonstrations of its truth; that when men were holding their peace

respecting it, the stones would cry out. Have we not found this to be the fact? You say that Islamism has not fallen before the Cross. No, but Islamism has become one of God's witnesses for the Cross when those who pretended to bear it had really changed it for another standard. You say that Hindooism stands undisturbed by the presence of a triumphant Christian nation. Yes, for Hindooism has been wanted to teach this nation what it is very nearly forgetting itself, very nearly forcing others to forget, that Christianity is not a dream or a lie.

I believe these conclusions must be brought home, in some way or other, to the hearts as well of those who are earnest about heathen missions as of those who are indifferent to them. For what is it that palsies all efforts of this kind; what is it that produces the contrast which we have confessed between the teachers of our own and those of earlier days? Is it not that we have more than half subscribed to the philosophical doctrine; more than half acted as if we were engaged in propagating a system of our own? Has not the impression we have conveyed to the minds of Mahometans and pagans been something of this kind: 'These Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Spaniards, or Englishmen, acknowledge a certain teacher, to whom they attach very high titles. They wish us to acknowledge their teacher instead of those whom we in Arabia, Persia, or Hindoostan, have been accustomed to honour. In other words, they wish to make us Europeans, to bring us over to their modes and habits of thinking.'

I know and thank God that other impressions than this have been made by the Christian missionaries of all ages and nations upon those among whom they have gone. I know that the hearts of many of them have been so possessed with the love of Him who died for them and for all mankind, that they could not speak of Him as if He was *their* teacher, the Head of their sect. By their language, by their acts, by that higher, simpler teaching which the Bible supplies, they must have carried home to many a broken-hearted creature, crying for a Comforter, the assurance that there is One who has taken the nature, not of Englishmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards, but of Man; who has entered into man's misery and death; has borne the sins of man; has encountered all his enemies, and vanquished them.

The history of Missions would be barren indeed if this were not the case. But the more we admit the worth of such testimonies—(how great it has been we shall not know till the great day of revelation)—the more convinced must we be that the old proclamation of a divine kingdom, the old Gospel that the Son of God the Deliverer of Man has appeared and will be shown hereafter to be the Lord of the universe, is the only effectual one; that this is as fresh to-day as it was eighteen hundred years ago, because it is a proclamation of that eternal Law of the universe, which wears not out, which grows not old; is not, in any sense whatever, our scheme, or theory of the universe, but is sent to confound, to break in pieces, our

schemes and theories of the universe; to show how feeble and contemptible we and they are; how little we or any human creatures want a theory; what absolute need all creatures have of a Living God who will reveal to us Himself: what relation there is between us and Him; how He works in us to bring us to know His purposes, and to move in accordance with them.

VIII. That last discovery is indeed one without which the words I have just been speaking would seem only words of discouragement. To look out upon the world, and see a valley covered with the dry bones of different systems, to hear them clashing together as if they might be joined to each other, and then to be told, 'It is all in vain; there is no voice which can bid the breath enter into these bones; perhaps it might have come from Christians, but it does not; they too occupy part of this valley; they have become dry bones, very dry indeed; clashing always, never uniting'—such an announcement as this, however softened by thoughts of the past or the future, must be a very mournful one. But that third great religion of the world comes to turn the current of these thoughts, to check this despondency. We are but ill provided with a theory, say the Buddhists; we have tried many, and little fruit has come of them. But this we are assured of: you Christians may not have heard it, but there is a quickening, life-giving Spirit, which is meant for humanity; which all may possess together; which alone can bring a universe out of chaos, unity out of division. Wonderful

testimony to be borne from the ends of the earth, from such a medley of strange people, so different in their thoughts, so incoherent in their utterances! Is not the report of it like the sound of that rushing mighty wind, which was heard on the day of Pentecost, not indeed itself the promised Power, but the type and herald of it? Does it not say that we too might have cloven tongues to declare, in different tones and measures, according to the different thoughts, habits, and apprehensions of men, the same wonderful works of God, and that these tongues might be of fire if only the living inspiration were confessed and obeyed by us? Does it not bid us remember that with this Spirit of peace and love and a sound mind we have been sealed; that the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which was to be the blessing, the permanent blessing, of Pentecost, has been bestowed upon us; that we hold this Spirit, not as the Buddhists dream, by our own right,—to be therefore the witness of our independence, flowing from no source whence it may be replenished—but as the very bond of our dependence and childhood, as the Spirit of adoption, whereby we are to cry, Abba, Father; as the power whereby we can ask and receive a new life day by day. If so, there is cause enough for humiliation in all of us, for despair in none. The broken limbs of the world may yet be united, if the broken limbs of the Church be united first. But are these the limbs of a great system, or of a living body? Holding the first opinion of herself, the Church has been either held

artificially together, the children within her groaning under the bondage to which she has subjected them, those without hearing in her invitation a message not of deliverance but of heavier slavery; or else, these artificial joints and fastenings being removed, she has split into fragments, upon which those who are clinging to them feel they can less and less depend, which offer to heathens an excuse for adhering to the tradition of their fathers, be it ever so dreary, till we who bid them leave it are agreed what they should adopt in its place. But if the Scripture language is true, if the Church is a body constituted in a Head, the Buddhist proclamation carries with it the reproof and consolation which we require. There is a Power which can bring us not into some imaginary condition of excellence, but precisely into our true condition: which can remove the individual interests, selfish feelings, national antipathies, narrow apprehensions that all our efforts to produce unity have only evoked and strengthened; which can bring down our high notions and conceits of what we are and what we do; which can enable us to be God's servants and to do His work in the world He has redeemed. Having confessed our rebellion against this Spirit, and sought the renewal of it in us and in the whole Church, we shall no longer say, as we have been tempted to say, 'The power of evil is supreme over the universe; only there has been a special deliverance vouchsafed to us;' we shall, from our hearts, abjure such blasphemous Manicheism; we shall say boldly to all people among whom we go,

'The devil is not your master, he has no right to your worship: the God, in whom is light and no darkness at all, has claimed you and the whole creation for his own. His marvellous light is as much for you as for us. We only enjoy it upon the condition of renouncing all exclusive claim to it, upon the condition of bidding you enter into it.'

IX. Buddhism, then, like Hindooism and Mahometanism, has its lesson for us. We are debtors to all these in a double sense. Nor, I think, is it otherwise with those modern infidels whose objections I have been considering throughout this course. Our obligations to them are not slight if they have been sent to break down a low grovelling notion we had formed of our own position and work; if they have been employed to convince us that human systems must indeed perish, one and all, that what survives must be something of a much higher derivation, of a more permanent character. We owe them the deepest gratitude if they have led us to ask ourselves whether there is any faith, and what kind of faith it is, which must belong, not to races or nations, but to mankind; still more, if they have forced us to the conclusion, that the real test, whether there be such a faith, and whether it has been made known to us, must be action, not argument; that if it exist, it must show that it exists; that if it have power, it must put forth its power. So, in this nineteenth century, the opponents of Christianity will return to the maxim which the wisest of them announced in the first:

"If this be of men, it will come to nought; if it be of God, we cannot overthrow it."

I have been anxious in these Lectures to show that I did regard this practical experiment of our faith as the really decisive one. In compliance with the directions of Boyle, I sought for that which seemed to be the most prevailing form of unbelief in our day; and I found it in the tendency to look upon all theology as having its origin in the spiritual nature and faculties of man. This was assumed to be the explanation of other systems, why not apply it to Christianity? The questions we have asked are, 'Is it the adequate explanation of *any* system? Do not *all* demand another ground than the human one? Is not Christianity the consistent assertor of that higher ground? Does it not distinctly and consistently refer every human feeling and consciousness to that ground? Is it not *for this reason* able to interpret and reconcile the other religions of the earth? Does it not in this way prove itself to be *not* a human system, but *the* Revelation, which human beings require?'

'Prove!' you cry: 'Yes, on paper! It is easy to prove many things about human creatures when you are not actually dealing with them.' Assuredly, most easy. It was of this that the other clauses of Boyle's will warned me. They said very significantly, 'Your business is to urge upon your countrymen the duty of not proving Christianity upon paper; but of entering into actual intercourse with Jews, Mussulmans, Hindoos, Buddhists, for the

purpose of showing that it is a reality.' Accordingly, I have never lost sight of this object. My questions have been, 'How may we bring Christianity into contact with the actual convictions of these different people? How may we put it upon the broadest trial? Where have other instruments and appliances failed? for that is the point on which we would make this bear. Where may it most clearly prove its inefficiency, if it be inefficient?' In no case have I wished to disguise any apparent symptoms of its failure. I have entreated Christians and infidels to investigate these symptoms, that they may ascertain the causes of them. And lest you should fancy, from the view I took of these systems, that I was recommending some new method of dealing with them, which could only be learnt and applied after a long discipline, and at last could scarcely be followed by simple ministers of the Gospel, I have endeavoured to show you in this Lecture, that precisely the course I have suggested is that which the preachers of the Gospel in the first ages actually adopted, that our departures from it have arisen from want of simple faith; that the discipline we require is especially one to restore this faith. And lest, from what has been just said about the unity of Christians, you should conclude that I suppose missions to the heathen should be deferred till some indefinite time when the nations of Christendom can make a simultaneous assault upon the outlying world, I would remind you that my reference to the first ages, and to the successful missionary efforts of every subsequent age, precludes

such a notion. What nation of the earth owes its Church to a simultaneous effort among nations or among men? If any one nation takes its stand upon its true ground as a member of that body whereof Christ is the Head, that nation becomes a witness to all Christian nations of their true Unity, if they care ever so little for it; that nation can fulfil its own task of vindicating the truths which its heathen subjects confess, by imparting to them the truths which they want, though all the other Christian nations should smile or frown upon its endeavours. Any Christian man who takes his stand upon the same ground of unity in the Church whereof Christ is the Head, who acts consistently with that position, fulfilling the office to which he is called, and not seeking some other to please himself, may become a witness in every land to which he goes of the fellowship into which his baptism has brought him; may in his words or life expound the principle of this fellowship; may show how universal its privileges are, and how each may for himself partake of them.

But I know that there must be many on whom the often-repeated words, 'There are heathens at our doors, we ourselves are half heathens; leave Buddhists and Mahometans till you have provided for these,' will have an effect sufficient to destroy their interest in all such exhortations. One answer to these objections is well known, and has been sufficiently used. If Englishmen did abstain rigidly from all intercourse with Mahometans, Hindoos, Buddhists, if no body of our countrymen were

engaged in trading with other countries, or in conquering them, or in keeping possession of them, the interdiction of all spiritual communication might be judicious—at all events possible. But as the points at issue are, what *kind* of communication shall we hold with these people, what *kind* of help or protection shall we extend to them: if they are spiritual creatures, and as such must in some way be dealt with, then how?—since this, I say, is the fair statement of the case, such appeals to our home sympathies seem rather capricious and rhetorical than benevolent or sensible. But this is not the only reply which is suggested by our particular circumstances; or which lies in the nature of the subject itself. A faith which boasts to be for humanity cannot test its strength unless it is content to deal with men in all possible conditions. If it limits itself to England, it will adapt itself to the habits and fashions and prejudices of England, of England too in a particular age. But doing this, it will never reach the hearts of Englishmen. You say, 'Try your Christianity upon the cotton-spinners of Manchester, upon the hardware men of Birmingham; if it fails with them, do you expect it will succeed in Persia and Thibet?' We know it will fail, it must fail in Birmingham and Manchester, if it addresses the people in those places mainly as spinners and workers in hardware. This has been the mistake we have continually made. We have looked upon these 'hands' as created to work for us; we have asked for a religion which should keep the 'hands' in the state in which they will

do most work and give the least trouble. But it is found that they are men who use these hands; and that which is a religion for hands, is not one for men. Therefore it becomes more evident every day that there is a demand in Manchester and Birmingham for that which, till we understand human beings better, we cannot supply. To acquire that understanding we need not grudge a journey to Persia or Thibet; we need not think it an idle task to inquire what people want, who are not called to spin cotton or work in hardware, but who are creatures of the same kind with those who do. When thoughtful men say that a working age of the world is about to begin, they mean, I suppose, an age in which those essential qualities of humanity which belong to working men as much as to all others shall be more prized than the accidents by which one class is separated from another. Most important is it then to ascertain whether we are holding a faith which addresses us as members of a class, a class of fine gentlemen, philosophers, divines, or one which addresses us as men, which explains the problems of our human life. Two centuries ago Boyle was led in deep anguish of spirit to consider that question for himself; for himself, and not I think without something of the like anguish, must each one of us consider it in this day. We are told that circumstances have changed, that our condition is a different one from his. Doubtless, the saying is true; circumstances are always changing; but the necessities of man's being do not change.

What was true of man generations ago, is true now. If our condition is different from that of our forefathers, the difference is this: we are come nearer to the great crisis of all controversies, there is less power of hiding ourselves from realities amidst shadows and appearances. Thanks be to God that such a time has come, terrible as it may be to many, nay to all of us! For this is the time which will show that His truth is not of man, neither by man: but that it is for men, here and everywhere. Only then when the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth,—so speaks individual experience, so speaks the voice of history,—is it known assuredly that the Word of our God shall stand for ever.

THE END.

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